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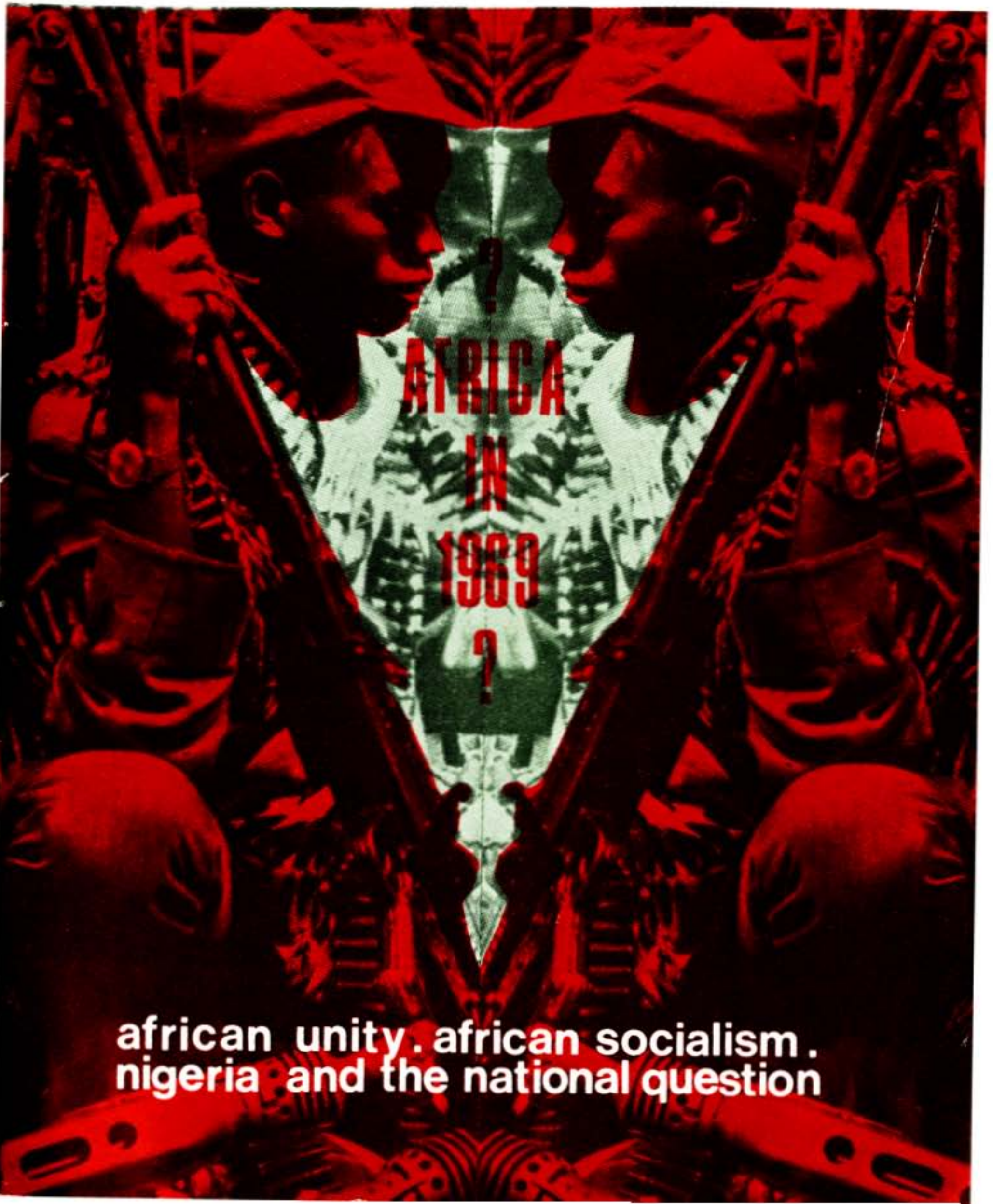

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THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

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No. 36 First Quarter 1969

Contents

5 EDITORIAL NOTES
Zimbabwe, Britain and the World
Indonesia
At the Olympics

11 AFRICA IN 1969?
African Unity Now
The National Question and Nigeria
ALBERT ZANZOLO
In these two companion articles a well-known contributor to this journal presents some frank and outspoken thoughts on the position of the Organisation of African Unity and some of its member states at the closing stages of the first decade of formal independence. His challenging comments on Nigeria in relation to African unity and the development of nations are also timely and refreshing. Neither article necessarily reflects the views of the Editorial Board and readers are invited to add their own comments.

25 AFRICA'S CHANCE FOR SOCIALISM
N. NUMADE
Another contributor whose articles in earlier issues of THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST *won widespread comment, returns to a theme which has been somewhat neglected since the most recent reactionary coups d'état. Do these, and other negative tendencies, mean that the countries of Africa have inevitably to traverse the painful road of capitalist development followed by the peoples of other continents? Numade thinks not; but he does not shirk the formidable difficulties of achieving the alternative socialist road.*

33 THE TUNISIAN WAY: MYTH AND REALITY
MOHAMMED HARMEL
An authoritative spokesman of The Tunisian Communist Party examines the various aspects—some progressive, some reactionary—of the Bourgiba government. Paying tribute to the positive achievements since independence, he nevertheless exposes the glaring weaknesses and contradictions of the non-Marxist 'Destourian Socialism.' In this article, first published in World Marxist Review, *Comrade Harmel argues for a 'real dialogue between all the progressive forces' and advances the immediate proposals of the Communist Party.*

Contents (*continued*)

46 AFRICA: NOTES AND COMMENTS
J. J. JABULANI
Mozambique, Mali, Ghana, Congo, Algeria, Angola, Sudan, Malawi, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Equatorial Guinea, Tunisia, Uganda.

62 STUDENTS IN REVOLT
ALEXANDER SIBEKO
A wide-ranging survey covers strudent unrest in many parts of the world, and analyses the ferment of ideas, many of an 'ultra-left' character, the strengths, weaknesses and overall significance of the student movement. A subsequent article will deal with the student movements in South Africa.

74 COMINTERN
TERENCE AFRICANUS
Commenting on the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Communist International, the author sketches its history and discusses some of its lessons for the Communist and Workers' movement today.

83 PHILOSOPHY *IS* PARTISAN
A group of South African students abroad contribute a discussion of Lenin's struggle for Marxist philosophy and its significance for our own struggle.

90 BOOK REVIEW
African Women—their Legal Status in South Africa (H. J. SIMONS)

93 DOCUMENTS
From the session of the Preparatory Meeting, held in Budapest, November 18-21, 1968, for the World Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties.

Editorial Notes:

ZIMBABWE, BRITAIN AND THE WORLD

ONLY A SIMPLETON could believe that British imperialism, represented by the Wilson government, is genuinely concerned with the rights of the $4\frac{1}{2}$ million Africans who constitute nine-tenths of the population of Zimbabwe. It is over three years since Ian Smith and his 'Rhodesia Front' party, representing the extreme right wing of the small white minority (approximately one-sixteenth) grabbed power from the British and in the name of 'independence'—what bitter mockery!—claimed authority to maintain white domination indefinitely.

Of course this is really a matter between the whites who have usurped authority and the African masses who suffer under their tyrannical rule. The African people have begun to deal with this situation in the only way open to them, by armed uprising, and in due course they will settle accounts with the puny minority—mostly of alien birth—who

are so foolish as to imagine they can indefinitely maintain themselves as an hereditary aristocracy in the African land they have miscalled 'Rhodesia.'

The trouble is that this real issue has to a large extent been concealed beyond the empty sham of endless talks and 'negotiations' between London and Salisbury, as if the future of Zimbabwe were a private affair to be settled by two white gentlemen seated at a conference table or in a battleship. Both the content of these talks and the fact that they are being held at all are degrading betrayals which must bring a deep feeling of shame to every person in Britain who cares anything for human rights or the reputation of his country. To enter upon negotiations with the pirate Smith gang was, to start with, a sell-out. Since their illegal usurpation of power three years ago they have piled illegality on illegality, turning the country into a police state, detaining Mr. Nkomo—the rightful head of the State of Zimbabwe, in abominable conditions, without trial, for years on end; and bringing in foreign troops from the Republic to maintain their hated and despotic rule.

As for the 'Constitutional' proposals Britain has ceded everything Smith and his co-conspirators demanded. The Tiger proposals were a good deal worse than the 1961 Constitution which Wilson and his Labour Party colleagues, then in opposition, properly denounced as outrageously undemocratic; the Fearless proposals were even worse. There is no call or need here to go into the endless quibbling about what 'N.I.B.M.A.R' is supposed to mean, the 'five principles,' the 'blocking quarter,' the 'A' and 'B' voters rolls and all the rest of the legal hair-splitting. What does it all amount to? Wilson wants to be let off the hook and save face with British and world opinion. Smith wants his regime to be legalised—but not at the price of making a single concession to the anti-apartheid forces which make up the overwhelming majority of the world's population.

Neither gentleman gives a tuppenny damn for African rights.

The fight for African rights is one which of course can and must be conducted by those most affected—the African people of Zimbabwe, headed by the African People's Union.

But they cannot and must not be left to fight alone. Smith and his fellow-racialists in Pretoria and Lisbon are held in power by international imperialism which wants apartheid because of the vast profits they reap from Southern African exploitation. In the same way the anti-imperialist forces of the world have a duty and an interest in backing the Southern African revolutionaries.

The first step towards effective aid is to discard the false premises that 'Rhodesia' is the responsibility of Britain, or that the British are

ever likely to confer advancement towards liberation on the Zimbabweans. Historically, it is true, Britain bears the responsibility for the conquest of the territory and for the savage oppression and exploitation of its people. If one uses 'responsibility' to mean 'guilt' we can accept it. But to place the 'responsibility' for freeing the Africans upon present-day British imperialism is to be guilty of gross deception of oneself and everyone else concerned. It is equally deceptive to continue with the demand in 1969—though it may have been correct three years ago—for Britain to intervene militarily in Zimbabwe. Such intervention, if it takes place at all, will not be in favour of the Africans and against Smith. It will be—no doubt under the pretext of restoring law and order—against the Africans. The British and all the other imperialists are unalterably opposed to a real people's revolution in Southern Africa, and they will do everything in their power to stop it.

It is only with a clear realisation of these plain facts in their minds that the delegates to the January 1969 Khartoum Conference for solidarity with the fighting peoples of Southern Africa will be able to give genuine help and support.

INDONESIA

RUTHLESSLY THE MASSACRE of tens of thousands of Communists, patriots and democrats continues in Indonesia. Not satisfied with the blood of the leaders of the Indonesian Communist Party, one of the biggest in the world, the rabid reactionaries who now control the country, have turned upon the Party's basis among the masses, the millions of ordinary working people in the towns and villages whose crime was that they loved their country and wanted it to be independent, progressive and socialist.

For us of Africa it is particularly tragic that these horrible events should be taking place in a major Afro-Asian country, the site of the historic Bandung Conference which charted the path of independence, peace and progress for the teeming millions of the twin continents.

Estimates of those already killed in this bloody series of pogroms, inspired and fanned by the ruling military junta, range already into half a million, and still the savage butchery goes on.

We of THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST fully associate ourselves with the moving protest adopted unanimously by the representatives of 67 Communist and Workers' Parties who met in Budapest in November last. We demand the immediate cessation of this barbarous slaughter and the restoration of human rights, including that of the Communists to re-establish their Party and to work legally in Indonesia.

AT THE OLYMPICS

OLYMPIC COMMENTATORS, made dizzy by their obsession with altitude problems, deprecated and pushed political issues into the background, playing down the unprecedented political inferno permeating the recent games. The attempt to readmit racist South Africa, the arbitrary omission of the People's Democracies of China and Korea, the bloody suppression of student and worker demonstrations in Mexico City, and finally the ejection of Black Power militants, were a bitter and contrasting accompaniment to the spirit of the Olympics, ironically exemplified by the arrival of the symbolic torch of freedom from 'democratic' Greece via Spain.

Herluf Bidstrup in *Land og Folk* (Copenhagen)

The dominant feature of the Olympics, as if in defiance of the machinations of reaction, was the powerful display by American black athletes, shattering all existing records in every sprint event. At the same time, the myth that African aptitude is limited to 'short distances,' was exploded by the Kenyans and Ethiopians, who between them collected almost every medal in the middle and long distance events. In the light of this explosion there can be no similar fallacy about field events or, for that matter, any of the many Olympic sports all of which are certain, in the near future, to be under siege to black competitors. For the time being, however, the expense and specialisation endemic to these sports is prohibitive, especially while there is blatant social discrimination as in the United States or simply a lack of money and facilities as is the case in the less developed countries.

A thorough analysis of sports prowess in relation to social conditions would, no doubt, make an interesting and revealing study, but

it is not the task of this editorial; suffice it to say that the ascendancy of black athletes comes at a most significant time: a time when the oppressed Afro-Americans are vigorously demanding their full rights, a time when Africa is establishing and consolidating self-rule, and at a time when, more than ever, the achievements of socialism are being demonstrated to the world, and the socialist countries, proven champions of oppressed peoples, are dictating the pace of world events. The campaign against the International Olympic Committee's decision to readmit South Africa was successfully led by the Africans with solid support from the socialist member states. This movement, linked with the Afro-American 'Olympic Project for Human Rights,' has led to closer ties between African and Afro-American athletes, who together are working to remove the reactionary and race-minded leadership from the I.O.C.

The outstanding success scored by Afro-American athletes on the track, is equalled only by the courageous and dignified political demonstration by the same athletes from the winner's rostrum, resulting in frenzied criticism from the I.O.C. and the subsequent expulsion from the American team, of Juan Carlos and Tommy Smith, two of the Black Power militants. Tommy Smith, world record holder and the fastest man alive, when questioned about his action commented 'If I was a lawyer I would take my case to the courts but I'm an athlete so I must declare it here from the rostrum' and Juan Carlos: 'We still feel like robots, we perform when they wind us up and they stick us back in the closet when the Games are over.' It is worth noting that no similar action, or even comment, was provoked by the Portuguese team who arrogantly delivered a fascist salute to the Mexican president during the march past at the opening ceremony. It is clear that the majority of competing athletes deplored the victimisation of Smith and Carlos and many voiced their indignation. A West German relay team at an interview, shortly after their defeat by a 'Black Power team,' sported Civil Rights badges and asserted their solidarity with the militants, as did many British athletes, one of whom, in company with some team-mates declared the demonstration, 'a bloody good show.' It has been reported that the Cubans are now sending their hard-earned medals to the Black Power movement as a token of solidarity; a fine gesture, and very significant when one recalls the chauvinism and insensitivity displayed on the mass media by 'experts,' demanding 'gold' at any price and imposing on the Games an international type rat-race.

The tradition and humanist spirit of the Olympics are derived from ancient Greece. Notwithstanding the fact that the original Olympics were élitist, based as they were on a master-slave society, the ideals

carried forward to our age are timeless and indispensable to mankind. What is intolerable and contrary to those ideals is that the master-slave relationship should persist in new forms, highlighted by Apartheid South Africa and by the racist policies of the U.S. government. The action taken by the Black Power athletes at the Mexico Olympics therefore deserves the highest praise and support. The U.S. Olympic committee demands from its dissident team members 'good manners and sportsmanship'—a sad and contemptible ethic, flying in the face of the 'good manners and sportsmanship' meted out to the black ghettoes of America, the people of napalm saturated Vietnam and the millions all over the world struggling against the barbarism of U.S. imperialism.

AFRICAN COMMUNIST — ANNOUNCEMENTS

Correction

We regret that the wrong serial number was mistakenly printed on the cover of our last issue No. 35 (Fourth Quarter, 1968). This was incorrectly given as No. 36.

Distribution

Agents, subscribers and others kindly note that as from the beginning of 1969 the distribution of THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST is being undertaken by:

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As from the *next* issue, No. 37 (Second Quarter, 1969), new *postal* arrangements are being made. We therefore request any agent or subscriber who fails to receive his copies *to notify us without delay* at the above address.

Albert Zanzolo

AFRICAN UNITY NOW

THE FIFTH SUMMIT of heads of State and Government of the O.A.U. was held in Algiers during September last year. At the opening session speech after speech by the assembled statesmen stressed this as an occasion for self-congratulation. Interestingly enough the emphasis was not on the achievements of the O.A.U. but on the fact that it had managed to survive at all. Much was made of the fact that the summit was being held in revolutionary Algeria whose people had made the biggest sacrifices in the struggle for African unity and independence. The magnificent surroundings of the Palais Des Nations and the conference site could not however conceal the malaise affecting the organisation. The always outstanding President of Mali—Modibo Keita—in a brief contribution gave a warning that the soul seemed to have gone out of the organisation. What has happened to the grand edifice of Pan-African unity about which many generations had dreamed and fought?

STATE AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Since the Charter of the O.A.U. was adopted in Addis-Ababa over five years ago the organisation has grown. At the fifth session a warm welcome was given to Mauritius and Swaziland who brought the membership of the O.A.U. up to forty states. The accession to independence of the Tropical African Republic, formerly under Spanish rule brings the number to forty-one. The whole of Africa except the unliberated South now falls under the umbrella of the O.A.U.

The institutional development of the O.A.U. has been no less impressive. The Secretariat is making much progress at its headquarters in Addis Ababa. The appointment of Diallo Telli of Guinea for a further full term as Administrative Secretary-General will enable the policies and plans already in the pipe-line to be proceeded with.

There is now a regular budget for both the Secretariat and the other agencies of the O.A.U. The Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa (known as the Committee of Eleven) now assists a growing guerrilla movement in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. This is the case in spite of problems which have produced some strains both within and without the Liberation Committee.

The Conciliation Commission of the organisation has had very notable successes to its credit. This commission has mediated successfully in such inter-African disputes as that between Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia; Morocco and Algeria. The problem of mercenaries in the Congo-Kinshasa and the threat of secession there was settled.

The African Development with its headquarters in Khartoum is one of the more successful O.A.U. ventures which properly handled can have important effects on the economies of the African states. Inter-state co-operation on such matters as communications, regional planning, education, culture is proceeding steadily. African organisation of the refugee problem is admitted on all sides to be admirable. It is no wonder that with all this development in inter-state co-operation and O.A.U. institutions some members of the secretariat of the O.A.U. should feel that theirs is the most important international organisation after the United Nations. Yet the feeling of unease more and more haunts the O.A.U.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM

When the O.A.U. was formed the African revolution was in full flood. It seemed only a matter of time before the whole continent would have achieved the first step of formal independence. The statesmen who attended that first summit were men who had led the struggle for independence and enjoyed wide prestige among the masses. Whatever their faults the majority of them had been put in power by support derived from the masses of the people. In varying degrees they had acquired experience in the struggle against imperialism.

In 1964 imperialism which appeared to be losing one position after another in Africa struck back. The parachute-drop on Stanleyville (now Kisangani) by Belgium with the support of Britain and the United States was the signal for a wholesale counter-offensive on the continent. Progressive regimes were overthrown in a series of military coups. Respected leaders were replaced by soldiers whose only claim to fame was that they had attended one or other imperialist military institution. The recent tragic case of Mali shows that this process has not ended. Attempts are being made to dismember the largest State

in Africa—Nigeria—which has the potential to become one of the world's great powers if it remains a single state. Egypt and the closest allies of the African states, the other Arab countries, have suffered aggression at the hands of Israel which in this case as previously was acting as cat's-paw for world imperialism.

BASTION OF REACTION IN THE SOUTH

No less serious was the fact that the Republic of South Africa emerged more and more clearly as a hegemonic centre of reaction in Southern Africa with the full support of the imperialist powers. The continuing crisis in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and the attitude of Britain, South Africa and other Western powers shows that they are determined to prevent any further spread of genuine independence on the continent. Those states that have emerged to independence in Southern Africa such as Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho were so dependent on the Republic of South Africa as to occupy the position of virtual client states.

It is not only that the Republic of South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia are being helped to consolidate their economic and military power by France, Britain, Japan, United States and other imperialist states; but in addition the aggressive foreign policy and expansion of South Africa is part and parcel of the plan to either re-colonise Africa or reduce it to a neo-colonialist preserve. The imperialists of West Germany whom the Western powers short-sightedly helped to re-establish themselves are playing a key role in supporting and acting through the Republic of South Africa in the subversion and exploitation of Africa.

SOME PROBLEMS OF AFRICA

The way in which Africa has been affected by the counter-offensive of imperialism cannot be separated from certain basic problems that almost all the African states are faced with. Some of these problems have been referred to and discussed over and over again. They are not new. But the fact that they are old does not make them any less potent in their consequences.

Fundamental is the fact that Africa does not have control of its vast resources and wealth. It is often said that one of the chief reasons for the weakness of Africa is that it is a supplier of raw materials whose price is subject to the whims of the international imperialist commodity market. As the prices of manufactured goods has gone up so the price of raw materials has gone down. All this is only too true.

But it begs the real question. To whom do the raw materials themselves belong, who markets them? The answer is that even the raw materials are not owned by the peoples of Africa. Imperialist ownership and control, direct or indirect, of the minerals, agricultural products, the markets, banks, communications, transport is the major source of weakness of most African states.

The fact of control of our resources by foreigners is a fundamental basis for continuing the struggle against imperialism at a higher level. African unity cannot be achieved unless we in fact control our own continent and its resources. That we do not own and control our resources does not however mean that we do not have traitorous classes that have emerged which have a stake in the preservation of the status quo. Independence has brought into being a compradore class of bureaucrats in government, traders and farmers who depend for their wealth on the support of and favours from the foreign imperialists. Many who formerly worked for independence and were willing to share hardships with the masses have within a relatively short time amassed great wealth by utilising government office as a means of accumulating capital. This class is generally supported by the civil service which in most cases is the old one inherited from the colonial period. It can also count on the army and police force whose officers were trained and continue to be trained at imperialist military establishments such as Sandhurst.

The twin weapons of the compradore class are tribalism and anti-communism. It is one of those historical absurdities that many reactionary African leaders believe that the destiny of Africa, its greatness and power, can be built up with the help of the very imperialists who have oppressed and exploited us so long and continue to do so. There is absolutely no doubt that anti-communism and a failure to establish close relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist states make the dream of Pan-African unity infinitely more difficult to achieve.

ABSENCE OF DEMOCRACY

A characteristic of the states dominated by the compradore classes is the absence of democracy in government or its circumvention by various transparent strategems. The scandal in Kenya where hundreds of candidates in local elections belonging to the opposition Kenya People's Party were disqualified, is typical. Vital decisions affecting the people are made without reference to the people. Nor are we confining the content of democracy to elections only. The full content of democracy implies a radical reform to ensure that the civil service is representative of the people and not the imperialists and also that the economy is placed more under the control of the people.

FALSE MILITANCY AND SOCIALIST TALK

A major weapon of deception in many states of our continent is the tactic whereby reactionary elements make very militant statements; create 'revolutionary parties' and even espouse a sort of 'socialism' whilst their deeds are the exact opposite. This is a package very clearly marked 'made by the C.I.A.' Its most notable practitioner is the regime in Congo-Kinshasa which has had successes in deceiving the masses in the country and outside it in Africa. The disgraceful execution of Pierre Mulele after he was tricked into entering the Congo on an official safe-conduct under amnesty, is of a piece with the murder of Patrice Lumumba by the same groups.

EFFECTS ON THE O.A.U.

Naturally the O.A.U. could not fail to be affected by all these developments.

The number of states in the O.A.U. has increased to forty-one. But the real question is to what extent the balance between progressive and reactionary states has been altered over the years. States that have recently achieved independence such as Botswana, Swaziland, Mauritius and Lesotho can hardly be described as adding to the progressive forces in the O.A.U. Formerly progressive states have been replaced by reactionary ones as for example in Ghana and now Mali. Others which were reactionary before have become worse as in the instance of Malawi and various French-speaking states. The no-nonsense attitude of the imperialists have produced fear among many political leaders. A short-sighted conception of national interests is brought to bear on every issue. 'Realism' is the reason given for every surrender or compromise with imperialism.

What was the attitude of the O.A.U. to the Israeli aggression on one of its leading member-states—the U.A.R? The organisation at the time when the aggression occurred and shortly thereafter was divided and confused and some members even supported the Israeli position at the United Nations. The belated resolution adopted at the Algiers summit supporting the just cause of the Arabs merely highlighted the original pro-imperialist stand of many African states.

The position on Apartheid and racialism which used to be uncompromising is now equivocal. At the meetings of the Political Commission of the Council of Ministers which preceded the Algiers summit, it proved very difficult to get a unanimous resolution condemning Apartheid and naming those imperialist powers which gave it support. The draft which included criticism of Malawi and other states which are establishing relations with South Africa was amended so as to avoid naming Malawi.

THE O.A.U. AND THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

As long as the richest and most highly developed part of Africa remains under foreign or white minority rule it is not possible to unite the continent. Not only that but the independence and development of the free states are endangered by the existence of the unliberated south of Africa. For Africa to participate in the intractable and hard struggle for liberation of those countries still unfree is not a favour, it is a sacred duty and in their own ultimate interests.

By and large Africa has done its duty to the liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, South Africa and Namibia. But certain matters must be stated very frankly. The contribution of African states to the struggle for freedom has not been consistent and equal. It is no doubt invidious to name any particular countries as this might suggest comparisons and imply that those not named have not been doing their duty. But we cannot avoid mentioning such countries as Tanzania, Zambia and Algeria which have given much needed help in all fields to liberation movements. Other countries have been regular and unfailing in their contributions to the Committee of Liberation. The question is what those countries think which have not been prepared to carry out their obligations.

Some statesmen have suggested that the liberation movements must not look to independent African states but should look to their own devices in the struggle for the liberation of their peoples. This has been said as some kind of blackmail particularly by those who would like to question the undoubted right of liberation movements to determine their own strategy and tactics. At the last session of the summit held in Algiers this school of thought was represented by the Vice-President of Kenya Mr. Arap Moi who made absolutely unacceptable remarks about the liberation movements which could not have been the official policy of even the Kenya government. The patronising attitude adopted by leaders of some African states towards liberation movements could be overlooked and ignored if it did not seriously impair the struggle for liberation itself. There is now definite evidence of a danger in this regard.

And there is no doubt that central to the malaise affecting the O.A.U. is the whole question of how seriously the independent states tackle the now fierce guerrilla struggle being waged by the liberation movements in Southern Africa. The increasing scale of the armed struggle and its long-term strategic implications are vital for the future of Africa and should be treated as such.

The debate on the Committee of the Liberation at the fifth Summit did not give much hope for more than tinkering with the problem of African liberation. No one doubts that much can be done to improve the

workings of the Liberation Committee. But the nature of some of the reforms proposed at the fifth summit were clearly designed to paralyse the work of the Liberation Committee. In particular the idea of rotating the membership of the Liberation Committee would have meant that at some stage there would have been such states as Lesotho, Malawi and so forth supposedly in charge of assisting and co-ordinating the struggle for liberation in Southern Africa. It is such absurdities that create a doubt as to the seriousness which the task of liberation is viewed, by some states in Africa.

The issue of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) is another which has shown the O.A.U. in a bad light. Despite a warning by the Zimbabwe African People's Union and the other liberation movements a resolution was passed at the fifth summit which still recognised Britain as having 'responsibility' for solving the issue. It did not take long before the attitude of Z.A.P.U. which had called for an abandonment of this disastrous approach was proved to the hilt by the 'Fearless' and Salisbury sell-out talks.

AGAINST NEO-COLONIALISM—FOR NATIONAL DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

In order for Africa to advance further along the road to Pan-African Unity the continent must find once more its true voice. The ideological and political retreat in the face of the creeping recolonisation of the continent must be halted. The seminar held in Cairo in 1966 by revolutionary parties pointed the way to recovery. The banner of Pan-African pride and unity which was to a great extent stilled by the overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah must be picked up. But unity is not only a voiced aspiration, it is also a programme to be implemented. Such a programme would include greater control by the African public of its resources, economy and marketing; participation of the people in the administration of both the economy and the government; reform of the civil service so as to ensure that it is not in the service of the old imperialist interests; the creation of new security services loyal to Africa and independent of the international security services of the imperialist powers; the establishment of people's armies and the disbandment of the foreign trained and officered armies that have overthrown one African government after another and are manifestly unreliable; serious efforts to get out of the imperialist orbit in trade; an independent foreign policy and development of relations with the Socialist countries; ruthless elimination of corruption and accumulation of personal wealth by government officials which is discrediting all Africa. Last but not least, the liberation of Southern Africa and the

elimination of white minority rule need to be given their proper place in the policy and activity of all African states.

The non-capitalist path of economic development, national democracy and socialism are the essential basis for the revitalisation of the O.A.U. and the achievement of Pan-African Unity today.

The National Question and Nigeria

RECENT EVENTS particularly in Nigeria have focused attention on the problems connected with the formation of nations in Africa. This conflict in the largest state in Africa has been a graphic illustration of all the difficulties which, in one way or another, occur in many states on our continent.

It is no use denying that even amongst progressives there have been very divergent views on the correct attitude to be adopted towards the tragic events in Nigeria. These differences do not arise only from the fact of the real complexity of the Nigerian situation but also from the fact that serious weaknesses exist in the present level of Marxist-Leninist studies on the continent. There are few Marxist-Leninist parties in Africa. But even taking this into account, it is remarkable, that in a continent confronted with very real and serious problems of nation-building at all levels and in almost all African states, there should be so little indigenous research and literature on the national question.

Our theory provides a working description of a nation which, generally speaking, can be said to consist of a historically formed community; the community occupies a definite territory; speaks a common language; has a common economy, culture and traditions. There was a time when all these elements of a nation were considered dogmatically as part of a fairly rigid definition. This led to the various elements that make up a nation to be treated in much the same way as those of a chemical compound, so that if any was missing, it was then concluded there was no nation. The issue could be crucial as it was considered that only a nation had the right of self-determination, that is, the right to secede from another which was oppressing it and form a separate sovereign state.

Correctly viewed the elements which constitute a nation have like everything else to be considered dialectically and concretely in terms of their connections and inter-connections with surrounding social phenomena, both internal and international, from *the point of view of the development of the world proletarian revolution.* Thus one or other element could be absent from this or that nation. Some nations

do not have one common language but it would be wrong to conclude that in consequence they were not nations. Similarly the fact that a nation does not occupy a definite territory is no justification for failing to recognise that it constitutes an oppressed national group entitled to self-determination, that is, to the consistent application of full democracy or equality. The Afro-Americans in the United States would appear to fall in this latter category.

Central to the elements of a nation which makes it possible to have a scientific outlook regarding this problem is the fact that the formation of nations has been connected with the victory over the feudal social structure by the capitalist social formation. Therefore the capitalist economic system has gone hand in hand with the formation of nations in the period before the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917. The examples are numerous and include Japan, Italy, Germany and all so-called old states in the world. In fact the very rapid economic development of such countries can be traced to the fact that by the time they began on the road of capitalist development they had the other elements of nationhood settled—definite territory, common language, common culture, traditions and characteristics. Unity was achieved when capitalism was a progressive force in the fight against feudalism which was an obstacle to the formation of the national market.

THE POSITION IN AFRICA

The first point to stress in regard to Africa is that present processes are taking place in the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism. There exists a powerful World Socialist System, headed by the Soviet Union, which lies at the core of the world revolutionary process. This camp of progress exerts a decisive influence on all world development. The struggle between the new socialist system and the old world of capitalism and imperialism is central to the analysis of any problems anywhere in the world. It is impossible even correctly to pose any question without taking this reality into account.

The existence of the socialist world is a tremendous advantage to the process of nation-building in Africa; and properly taken advantage of can result in very speedy economic and social development of nations in Africa. The African nations need not go through the painful path of capitalism which led, especially in Europe, to national rivalries, conflicts and disastrous wars. African nations emerging in the period of the achievements of socialism, when the bourgeoisie has outlived its usefulness, can achieve their destiny under the banner of socialism. This is the only condition under which such nation-

building can proceed voluntarily without conflicts, wars and violence among the Africans themselves.

Naturally imperialism is ready as always to interfere with, retard, and exploit the difficulties of nation-building for its own advantage. This is a very real obstacle that must be taken into account in a study of the factors operating on this problem.

What is the internal position in African states? Here we are faced with a varied and complex situation. In the first place the boundaries of African countries were fixed by the imperialists and bore no relation to the wishes and desires of the people. The African states realising the tremendous divisive effects of any conflict over boundaries have now legitimised the colonially formed boundaries of their states by resolution of the Organisation of African Unity. It should be noted that in some cases colonial boundaries have been altered by agreement among Africans. Thus the Mali Federation which achieved independence as a single state was later separated into the states of Mali and Senegal. The Cameroons which were part of Nigeria voted to join the Kamerun Republic. The same occurred in regard to Togo, part of which was previously in Ghana. So there have been cases where the colonially formed territories were altered by agreement. Nevertheless, this problem of boundaries still creates conflicts which have been contained with difficulty as with Somalia and her neighbours. But generally speaking there seems to be no doubt that the African states were right to legitimise the boundaries inherited from the imperialist powers and thus de-fuse a potentially very dangerous situation in which conflicts over boundaries could have resulted in hundreds of little and big wars.

The social system inside each African state is another factor of complexity. In many cases the society found by the imperialists was pre-feudal. These societies were brought into the vortex of the capitalist exchange economy. Yet in essence many of the feudal or pre-feudal features were preserved and encouraged by the imperialists as a device to maintain their rule. The emergence of an indigenous capitalist class was stifled and the evolution of a common national culture was retarded. In many cases, therefore, independence was achieved before the process of nation formation was complete.

In many of the states there is no common language. There are often many languages with the result that a foreign language is accepted as a lingua franca. For obvious reasons the foreign language, whether it be French or English, is the possession of a small educated élite and not of the masses. The obstacles that this imposes on the possibilities of a mass literacy campaign and therefore to the unification of language are enormous. A truly national and popular culture and

literature becomes difficult. When this goes hand in hand with large varieties of culture and characteristics, it will be seen how difficult the problem is. There is no need to engage in the futile argument as to whether some groups in Africa are 'tribes' or 'national groups'. But the fact is that the problem of tribal or clan allegiance is a very serious one that stands in the way of united nationhood in many states.

Since independence there has also been a rapid development of a compradore bureaucratic bourgeoisie in many African states, closely linked with international imperialism. Even where such a bourgeoisie is relatively weak in world terms, it can grow and is growing rapidly. Because of its ideology and dependence on imperialism it is more and more an unnatural force and an obstacle to a genuine policy of united nationhood which is patriotic, anti-tribalist and progressive. Such a compradore bourgeoisie is ready to be a willing tool of imperialist intrigues directed at creating secessions, dismemberment of African states, territorial demands and fanning of tribal passions.

THE PROBLEM OF NIGERIA

The great civil conflict in Nigeria is an illustration of difficulties faced in varying degrees by Africa as a whole. When this great country achieved its independence eight years ago, it was on the basis of boundaries fixed by British imperialism less than two generations ago. Nevertheless, the people of the country accepted the destiny of a single country voluntarily and there was no dissentient voice, though there were some doubts.

Within the country there are numerous groups, speaking a variety of languages and having different social structures, levels of economic development. The governmental structure was negotiated with the British who were interested in a weak Nigeria. There was also the built-in weakness of competing ruling groups centred on the Ibo bourgeoisie, the Yoruba landlords and the Hausa feudal families. All political activity at central, regional and local level was dominated by these interests and their competition for supremacy. As always happens before the workers and peasants find their own representatives, the masses were often drawn into these struggles. Nothing that has happened in Nigeria suggests that the politics of the country have gone beyond this framework. Once, during the successful national strike in 1964, all sections of the ruling groups suffered the shock of their lives by the spectacle of independent working class power. The formation of the Nigerian Socialist Workers' and Farmers' Party closely followed this historic event. But one searches in vain for the independent action of the workers and peasants in the present civil

war which still appears by and large as a struggle between representatives of the old ruling circles. Behind the military leaders we see all the old faces—Azikiwe, Okpara, Enahoro, Awolowo. In the North, Katsina, scion of the ruling groups, seems to be the strong man behind whom lurks the emirs, sultans, sardaunas and their families. And, as in the Middle East, oil and imperialism are closely connected with events.

In such conditions what is the correct proletarian outlook? Some elementary questions arise at once. All we hear is the history of the coups; who were killed; secession by the Ibo; changes in the organisation of states and regions in the federation to prevent, in this way, dominance by any group over others. But the questions of interest are who owns the land, factories, mills, plantations, minerals, communications of Nigeria? Who are the people both inside and outside the country who benefit from the system there? Will the proletarian revolution benefit by the break-up of the Nigerian Federation?

The right of secession and self-determination is supported by the proletariat when an oppressed nation seeks to separate from the oppressor nation. It will be extremely difficult to establish that the Ibo are a nation that was or will be oppressed by the rest of the people of Nigeria. Many people argue the exact opposite. But the fact of the tragic communal violence of 1966 does not seem to be sufficient to establish the Ibo as an oppressed group. The argument that the other Nigerians are really the British in disguise is clearly contrived, as is the opposite argument that the attempted secession, supported by France, must be equated exactly with the Katanga secession.

Marxists do not support any and all 'national' movements. We support national movements that in the concrete situation are progressive. In the Nigerian situation the question to be asked is whether the secession of 'Biafra' is a progressive movement which helps the general struggle for emancipation of the African people not only in Nigeria but in the whole of Africa. The answer to the question does not depend on the 'progressiveness' or 'modernity' of this or that group. The entire working class of the world supported the struggle of the Ethiopians against Fascist Italy without reservation. This was irrespective of the fact that concretely Ethiopia was a backward, feudal monarchy in which the masses suffered slavery and oppression. Similarly the fact that Israel is a modern state cannot be a reason for supporting their policy as against that of relatively backward states who may surround them. In the context Israel is a reactionary state, because it is the instrument of American imperialist intrigues to lay hands on oil wealth in the Middle East.

Such secession must also be viewed in relation to the general struggle

against imperialism as a whole in Africa and the world. Reference to the tragic deaths of Ibos in Northern Nigeria in the latter part of 1966 does not justify supporting a secession whose implications in Africa could result in millions dying in a wave of secessions all over the continent. And in this as in all other democratic issues the part must give way to the general interests of the whole.

There is no evidence whatsoever that a break-up of Nigeria will assist the democratic movement in Nigeria. On the contrary the secession will definitely have serious economic, political and other disadvantages in Nigeria; will rob the progressive movement in that country of some of its most politically active and progressive contingents; deprive Africa of its huge giant country which has a potential that could be of profound significance in the Africa of the future. To speak as if secession is a break from the feudalists in the North is nonsense. This is to jumble up the millions of labouring workers and peasants in 'Biafra' and the rest of Nigeria with the reactionaries in the ruling classes.

All progressives desire to help Nigeria to achieve its destiny of a united national democracy proceeding along the path to a socialist country. It is this which is the aspiration of the millions of labouring people as distinct from the various ruling groups who are ever making people think that their aims are identical with those of the masses.

PAN-AFRICAN UNITY

The dramatic events in Nigeria are a microcosm of the problems existing in many African countries. It is this which makes the civil war there a matter of grave concern to the whole continent. Many of the factors relevant to the problems of the formation of nations in each African country apply to the concept of Pan-African unity which is also going through a crisis at the present time. The obstacles to internal unity within each African nation are the same that stand in the way of the unity of the African continent. Progressives who fight for unity in their countries on the basis of a national democratic and socialist policy are faced with the need to pick up the banner of Pan-African unity as well. Trends within the Organisation of African Unity show that attempts are being made to transform the grand aspiration for a united Africa into an instrument of imperialist-supported reaction which has made the Organisation of American States an effete and unimportant body. This cannot be allowed.

'The achievement of a united Africa is inseparably bound up with the continuation and the victory of the African Revolution; the victorious struggles of the masses of the people against colonialism

and its African agents; against reactionary forces and classes in Africa itself; for higher living and cultural standards and rapid economic development along non-capitalist lines; for eradication of imperialist economic domination in Africa; for agrarian revolution and industrial development; for democratic rights and national democracy; for a Socialist Africa.'*

* N. Numade. 'Towards a United Africa'. *African Communist* No. 9. April/May 1962.

Africa's Chance for Socialism

N. Numade

If Russia continues to pursue the path she has followed since 1861, she will lose the finest chance ever offered by history to a people and undergo all the fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist regime.

—Karl Marx, November 1877
(Marx-Engels Selected Correspondence, p. 312)

THE EDITORIAL in the very first issue of this journal (October 1959) was entitled 'The New Africa—Capitalist or Socialist?'. This question, it said, was 'something the peoples of Africa will have to answer for themselves.' It went on to say that the first task in Africa was to get rid of imperialism—but 'after imperialism has been defeated the struggle will not be over. The countries of Africa will still be faced with the tasks of overcoming poverty, exploitation, disease and ignorance. These battles can only be won by marching towards a Communist Africa.'

This theme was repeatedly returned to in subsequent issues of the journal. An Editorial ('Turbulent Africa') in No. 16 (first quarter 1964) dealing with the 'phases' of the African Revolution (independence; social revolution; African unity and socialism) pointed out that

> the phases of emancipation are inseparable . . . independence is deeply bound up with social revolution, with the simultaneous advance towards a united socialist Africa.

Looked back on in the light of the experience of the last decade, we are bound to ask some searching questions about the perspectives and goals which this journal and its contributors have so persistently set forth in its columns. Were we too ambitious or optimistic? Did we overestimate the possibilities of Africa achieving unity and avoiding the miseries inseparable from the capitalist road of development?

What lessons and perhaps revision of policies do we need in the light both of the undoubted achievements and the bitter disappointments and setbacks of the opening decade of the era of regained political independence? What prospects remain of a 'united, socialist Africa', in the light of these experiences?

In order to answer these questions we need soberly to review not so much the details—which need a separate article to themselves*—but the main trends of developments which have been taking in the swiftly-moving and ever-changing patterns of our continental reality.

The movement for African unity grew out of the concrete situation in which the peoples of Africa found themselves at the end of the second world war. The imperialist countries of Europe who for so long had been subjecting the entire continent to ruthless exploitation, were in a much weakened position. On the other hand the firm friends of African freedom, the anti-imperialist Soviet Union—now joined by a dozen more countries of Europe and Asia adhering to socialism—emerged with tremendously enhanced strength and authority. This was the main factor which gave our people all over Africa—as in Asia—the opportunity and the inspiration to build up their liberation movements to unprecedented heights and to challenge imperialism as never before. In one African territory after another—whether in the course of armed conflict or of peaceful negotiation against a background of militant mass action—the Western powers were compelled to concede the right to formal political independence.

These were great achievements of the African Revolution—of the revolutionary peoples of Africa. Whatever disappointments have been encountered in the post-independence period, we must never lose sight of the fundamental historic significance of the achievement of political independence; the indispensable groundwork for all we have achieved and hope to achieve.

The winning of independence by each African territory was the fruit of struggle by the people of that country—but not of that country alone. Not one of our independent states could have broken free from control by its former European masters but for the moral and practical support and assistance of others—in the first place of their fellow Africans. It is of course profoundly true that the fight against imperialism is world-wide. The great breakthrough made by the Russian workers half a century ago presaged and enormously facilitated the emancipation of African and other peoples from colonialism in our time, just as our Vietnamese brothers and sisters are fighting our battles as well as their own. But to that general truth must be

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* See article by A. Zanzolo on page 11 of this issue.

added a particular one—that the emancipation of our continent is a task which can only be accomplished by the concerted endeavours of all the Africans, in whatever area they may be living.

Alone there is not a single African state which could successfully resist and defeat the enormous resources accumulated by international imperialism (so much of which resources have been and are still being looted from us and our brothers of Asia and Latin America). But *standing together against imperialism and neo-colonialism*, backed by our allies in the socialist countries and the revolutionary working-class movement in the capitalist countries we most certainly can and will achieve those great and formidable tasks with which history has inexorably placed before every African leader and patriot today. To complete the process of seeing that Africa is governed by Africans, especially in the Portuguese colonies and the enslaved South; to mend the havoc and destruction wrought by the colonialists so as to enable our peoples—by owning and developing African resources for their own benefit—to overcome the real inequality, continued dependence and alien exploitation of present-day independent Africa —these are the inescapable challenges which face every African government and state. To fail to meet and overcome them means condemning generations unborn to the same slavery for the benefit of foreigners under which we and our fathers have so long endured. These are vast undertakings for success in which there is no conceivable means than the closest and most realistic unity and co-operation on an all-African scale, in resolute and uncompromising struggle against the common enemy—imperialism.

It was precisely this spirit and understanding, passionately espoused by such outstanding African leaders as the late W. E. B. Du Bois and Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah which underlay the powerful impetus for African Unity, which found its expression in numerous conferences of our liberation movement and state representatives, and which reached its climax in the foundation of the Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U.) in 1963.

When the heads of all the thirty then existing African states came to Addis Ababa in May 1963 to lay the foundations of the O.A.U. it was a signal victory for the cause of African unity and freedom. Against the opposition of some colonialist-influenced leaders, who sought to limit the scope of the new organisation to questions of economic co-operation alone, the O.A.U. set in the forefront of its aims the liberation of the unfree South. That the African countries resolved not merely to improve their economic relations but also to unite as one force in helping the freedom fight in the Portuguese colonies, Rhodesia and South Africa was of immense historic import-

ance; as summed up in the statement of Ben Bella that it was more important at this stage to establish a blood bank for freedom fighters than to set up an All-African Development Bank. Practical steps were decided on—to institute an all-African and work for a world boycott of the South African regime—in trade, diplomacy, transport and every other field. A nine-member sub-committee was set up, with headquarters at Dar es Salaam, to co-ordinate the rendering of aid, from all African states, for the heroic freedom-fighters in the South.

More, the conflicting 'blocs' of African states under French or other tutelage were, it was decided, to be liquidated and a permanent machinery established to enable all African countries 'to pool their resources and harmonise their activities in the economic field'.

The historic summit of 1963 was followed by a series of striking advances in various regions of the continent. KANU—the militant KANU headed by Kenyatta who still seemed to the masses to be a revolutionary, and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga—swept the board in the Kenya elections, opening the way to an East African Federation which all believed to be a certainty. This was paralleled by the formal establishment of the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Federation in the West. Zanzibar rose, expelled the British-backed Sultanate and united with its mainland to form Tanzania. Algeria, adopting the revolutionary Charter of Algiers, opted for socialism. The Aboud dictatorship was overthrown in Sudan.

Unfortunately that intoxicating tempo of sweeping advance was not maintained. The more recent period had seen a series of tragic setbacks to the cause of African unity, African freedom and African socialism. It is only necessary here to mention such depressing events as the series of army coups, above all that in Ghana which temporarily deposed such a tireless champion of continental unity as President Nkrumah, to replace him by a junta of military men who have opened the doors to neo-colonialism and who are still eroding the historic gains of the Ghanaian working people; the parallel (though less spectacular) right-wing coup within Kenya's ruling party, abetted by the defection of the ageing Kenyatta, which resulted in the ousting of the militant wing headed by Jaramogi Odinga; the tragic and infinitely costly civil war still (at the time of writing) dragging on in Nigeria; the shocking reverses suffered by Egyptian arms (revealing profound inner weaknesses) owing to the American-backed Israeli aggression of 1967; the illegal seizure of power by the privileged white sixteenth of the population of Zimbabwe . . . and of course this list is far from complete.

Even while this article was being written came the tragic news of the military coup which resulted in the downing of the progressive

government of Mali, headed by that outstanding African patriot and advocate of Socialism, President Modibo Keita.

These reverses have naturally been accompanied by a corresponding decline in the authority, political content and sense of driving mission in the O.A.U. French imperialism has succeeded in once again reviving a 'special grouping' of African states under its tutelage in the form of O.C.A.M.

Despite outstanding and continuing support given to the Southern African liberation movements by a few African countries, the Committee established at its inception by the O.A.U. has not lived up to the great expectations placed in it. South African imperialism has succeeded in a number of countries in covertly breaking through the boycott, extending its influence and investments, and buying a number of corrupt politicians of our continent. The ignominious Banda may be the most brazen but he is by no means the only African leader who has—openly or covertly—deserted the sacred standard of Africa's fight against apartheid and white minority tyranny. The O.A.U. signally failed to rally to the side of one of its leading members, Egypt, when she was the victim of Israeli aggression. And the O.A.U. has likewise, thus far, proved powerless and disunited in its approach to the attempted dismemberment and consequent prolonged bloodshed in Africa's most populous country, Nigeria.

Just as we have seen such setbacks to the cause of African unity, so we are witnessing in many of our countries a sort of retreat from the challenging slogans and aims of 'African socialism' which but a year or so back were constantly on the lips of nearly all our politicians.

Of course, these negative phenomena do not make up a complete picture. In a number of African countries the abolition of exploitation and the starting of the road to socialism remain very much on the agenda; both Tanzania and Zambia combine policies of support for Southern African liberation with progressive and anti-capitalist internal lines of policy. Egypt's military reverses, however painful, have initiated a mass re-evaluation of the absurdity of combining socialist slogans with the total domination of bourgeois-minded people at every level of the civil and military services except the very top; and to take steps towards a purification of the ranks. The process of revolution is always uneven, richly complex, and by no means conforming to any prearranged pattern. We should not be unduly depressed by the reverses referred to above, but remember that the people are unconquerable and the next wave of our continuing African Revolution is bound to be more deep-reaching and transforming than our earlier independence struggles.

But if we are to cope with the tremendous problems that will in-

evitably face us in the coming new wave of our revolution, I think we must rethink some of the propositions which we tended to over-simplify or gloss over ten years ago. In his striking paper delivered at the Cairo Seminar in October 1966, Professor Ali Yata of Morocco pointed out that for too long we were prone 'to idealistic oversimplification and starry-eyed optimism which caused people to think that henceforward it would be smooth sailing.' In particular he singled out such slogans as 'a single African government,' put forward at a time when it did not correspond to reality, and the 'proclaiming' of socialism 'when the means for building it were lacking,' thus exposing the very concept to be put in danger of being discredited.

Both African unity and socialism are concepts capable of realisation in Africa. But in order even to begin fighting for these concepts we need to take a cool and realistic look at the main difficulties and obstacles which stand in the way of their realisation.

African unity, independent of imperialism, is a goal which cannot be obtained while such a large part of the continent, and one of such crucial political and economic significance, remains under the control of white racialists and Portuguese colonialists. To speak of unity without remembering this all-important fact, is in fact to play with ideas. The main single task facing every African patriot in every part of the continent was and remains that of assisting the freedom-fighters in the South and in the Portuguese colonies. For, without the South, Africa will continue to be mutilated and dismembered; and full independence will remain a myth.

Very large areas of Africa have still not developed to the stage of capitalism—if there are any industrial or agricultural enterprises employing large numbers of wage-workers they are usually owned by foreigners. Exchange-economy has hardly made its appearance. Most of our people, whether individually or communally are still stuck in the rut of subsistence farming, growing food for their own consumption, not for the market.

It is this circumstance which leads many people to doubt even the possibility of socialism for Africa, for socialism is the most modern system, the successor to capitalism, basing itself on advanced, large-scale industry and agriculture; upon public ownership and planning of production; upon the leading role of a substantial class of men and women who have acquired the habits of discipline and the advanced outlook of the modern proletariat.

These are weighty objections containing a grain of truth; yet I think they are basically wrong. Marx, nearly a hundred years ago, saw the *possibility* of Russia by-passing capitalism (due to the lack, at that time, of a powerful indigenous capitalist class and also the still-intact

system of communal and ownership) and seizing 'the finest chance ever offered by history to a people'—i.e. advancing directly towards socialism. Africa today still has a similar glorious chance—even more so, since she is regaining independence at a time when the world is in transition to socialism and more than a third of humanity is already building it.

Marx coupled his 'optimistic' forecast with a sombre warning—if Russia continued the path of reaction she would *lose* that chance, and have to undergo all the cruelty and injustice, 'the fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist regime.' She did indeed lose the chance; it was not until 1917 when the workers of Russia—after a miserable half-century of capitalism—put an end to it. But his vision of what was *possible* remains valid, borne out brilliantly by the triumphant experiences of Mongolia and other pre-capitalist societies which *were* able to skip the capitalist stage.

That chance remains open to Africa still. But if we are able to take it at all, we must clearly recognise certain blunt facts. Among these are:

Socialism can't be built in a country whose economy is dominated by foreign imperialism.

Socialism can't be built on the basis of small-scale, primitive agriculture and industry.

Socialism can't be built without the most ruthless struggle against bourgeois and prebourgeois exploiters, feudalists, tribalists, selfish, get-rich-quick state officials and the like.

The building of socialism demands as its leading and guiding force an organised working class, headed by a Party of scientific socialists, Marxist-Leninists.

This means that it's absolutely useless and harmful to keep on *talking* about socialism without taking the practical economic, political and organisational measures to turn that idle talk into action. Industrialisation, elimination of imperialist control and influence, sweeping land reforms, the rapid development of transport, communications, educated cadres—all these are absolute essentials; so is the building of a revolutionary Party of workers and peasants who study Marxism and apply its universal lessons to the concrete conditions of their own region.

Failure to implement these measures at once will certainly lead to our missing that 'finest chance' of which Marx wrote in relation to Russia.

Already we are seeing the massive development of a class of African bourgeoisie, ambitious politicians feathering their own nests and accumulating private capital, agents of foreign imperialist firms,

would-be capitalists who saw in independence only a chance of furthering their business and other ambitions while leaving the masses as badly off as ever.

What about the argument that there is no industry, no working class? That may be so for certain regions. But if we have the imagination to look at the continent as a potential economic region, we must take into account the area which does have a massive industrial base, a numerous and experienced working class, and the possibility—given its *early emancipation*—of acting in relation to most of the continent in the role which developed Russia played towards the more undeveloped parts of the Soviet Union.

As with the problem of unity then, so with the problem of bypassing capitalism and advancing to socialism. Both are finally and inevitably dependent on the liberation in the near future of the South.

Unity and socialism—both are possible and realisable goals. Without them Africa is doomed for a long time to weakness, instability, backwardness and inequality.

For a capitalist Africa there can never be any real independence. Socialism is our only hope.

But let us not forget that the road to socialism is hard and difficult; that the most crucial battlefront is that still awaiting us beyond the banks of the Limpopo River.

The 'Tunisian Way': Myth and Reality

Mohammed Harmel

TUNISIA'S POLICY has had many unique features ever since independence, which cumulatively comprise an 'original doctrine' presented to the world as an accomplishment in which Tunisia emulated the other newly-free countries, as a challenge to them and an invitation to follow suit. The dual policy of the country's leaders could well confuse foreign observers. Impressed by Tunisia's achievements in some fields and spurred by the official apologetics, some of them extol the 'Tunisian experiment' as a model for other developing countries. Others condemn it out of hand as reactionary and pro-imperialist, laying the main stress on the pro-American leanings of the Tunisian government.

To avoid these extremes, we should look into all the aspects and examine them in sum. That will enable us to compare the official picture with the actual situation and the country's possibilities, to learn of its social and ideological problems and to lift the veil on the country's future outlook.

The official pattern of Tunisia's socio-economic growth is based on the following conflicting propositions:

(a) Tunisia's backwardness may be overcome without a revolutionary policy, overstepping none of the reformist bounds that envisage modifications more in the spiritual sphere than in social structures;

(b) the existence of the state sector and government intervention in the economy may be reconciled with the extensively encouraged growth of the private capitalist sector, creating 'harmony' between them, eliminating the 'incongruities of capitalism' and securing 'socialist growth' with the participation of all social classes 'without the convulsions and violence' that according to the official doctrine usually accompany revolutionary reconstruction.

While protesting allegiance to socialism, the above scheme rejects scientific socialism and opposes the specific to the general (as though

Tunisian reality is not subject to the operation of the general laws of social development).

Its exponents call themselves progressive, yet persecute the country's most progressive forces, namely the Tunisian Communist Party banned in 1963, and clamp down on elementary democratic freedom. By so doing they expect to reconcile the interests of the exploiting strata with those of the people, to reconcile the ideas of Left and Right, within the framework of one-party rule. Last but not least, they contend that independence is quite compatible with the present foreign policy, although its pro-American aspects and its hostility to the progressive countries of the Arab world indicate that Tunisia may one day be reduced to the status of a satellite of the United States.

The government employs two ambivalent arguments to defend its doctrine, pointing to the success achieved since independence, on the one hand, and to the stability of the government, allegedly traceable to nation-wide support, on the other. And, naturally, the leadership is mute about the negative aspects, particularly strong of late, which reduce the weight of some of the positive effects.

OFFICIAL APOLOGIA AND THE FACTS

That Tunisia has made headway since independence is beyond question. The Communists will be the last to deny the positive aspects of the government's policy. They give due credit to the contribution of the Destour Socialist Party to the building of an independent Tunisia. The country has a relatively stable and modern administrative, political and financial structure. The dismantling of foreign military bases ended with the Bizerta ouster. Definite efforts have been made in advancing public education, training and Arabising cadres.

Achievements that could serve as a starting point for tangible and effective growth are on hand in the economy, a sphere of major importance in which the newly-free country grapples with many new tasks.

At first, the government experimented with economic liberalism, thinking it would offer scope for growth. A few years later, after summing up the results, it had to face up to the fact that economic liberalism had worked no wonders with the economy. Although the Tunisian bourgeoisie had eagerly responded to the call, 'Enrich yourselves!', it concentrated its attention on fields where profits were the easiest. Official statistics showed that 80 per cent of all investments went into import-export operations and real-estate speculation. The obvious ineptitude of the weak, chiefly commercial and rural bourgeoisie, the crying unsatisfied economic, political and social needs, and the favourable international situation prompted the government to abandon economic liberalism and tackle the burning problems

of the underdeveloped economy on its own, instead of the floundering bourgeoisie.

Abandoning its previous methods, the government adopted planning in 1961 and expanded the state sector. This produced results: new enterprises came into being in the form of state or mixed companies, previously colonised land was reclaimed, farm production societies were founded on it, and the system of distribution was reshaped.

While criticising the failings and errors of the regime, the Communists take an objective view of what has been achieved, back some of the measures and offer suggestions as to how to improve them and protect them against reactionary attacks. The new government policy could have wrought a change for the better, because it helped towards social and political differentiation. The conflict between the government and the big olive plantation owners in the Sahel area was indicative in this respect.

Economic growth and the compulsive need for state intervention in the economy have affected social relations, creating contradictions also within the government's social basis. However, instead of remedying deficiencies and continuing to radicalise its policy, the government regrettably accentuated the negative aspects and went out of its way to dampen the contradictions, sidestep any new way and keep the economy along the capitalist road. That was negative and explains why, its orientation being what it is, the government proved unable to resolve the country's key problems.

Its efforts to maintain 'class harmony', prompted by fear of the masses, and its desire to safeguard the interests of the exploiting strata, are both among the reasons for its failure.

Take the following figures: the ten-year plan drawn up for the Tunisian economy envisaged an annual 6 per cent growth of the national product and an accumulation rate of up to 26 per cent. That was to secure growth of production and an average of 50 dinars per capita income for the most needy.* It was envisaged, too, that foreign investments would not exceed 50 per cent.

Yet current statistics indicate that even these modest targets have not been attained. Despite some headway, the economy is still at a low ebb, unstable and dependent on foreign capital.

In 1964, the national product grew 3.5-4 per cent, but growth has lately again dropped to 2 per cent, which is fraught with dire consequences by reason of the steep growth of the population, and the outlook for a 50-dinar income per head of population has grown more remote. Though investments have reached a fairly high mark

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* US $=525 dinars.

(27 per cent of the gross product in 1961-1964), they have not produced the expected results, for they are chiefly put into non-productive fields, their effectiveness is extremely low and, lastly, because they are composed largely of foreign aid, which arrived with delays and was not always sound economically and financially. Maintaining that in eight years 47 per cent of the investments came out of home accumulations, official propaganda conceals the fact that the government had often resorted to inflationary measures and that the plan was fulfilled by virtue of foreign investments. The country's foreign debt grew annually, jumping from two million dinars in 1962-63 to fourteen million dinars in 1966.

The inflow of Western capital, notably from the United States, though enabling the government to finance its economic projects, was insufficient for any real economic advance. Now foreign aid is becoming a burden, pressing down on the country all the more strongly, the longer the government persists in its choice of the main trend of growth. The increasing debt, imports in disregard of the real needs, the increasing foreign influence on foreign policy and the enrichment of speculators—that is a far from complete list of the effects produced by US and West German aid, which, moreover, is far below what was promised.

Farming is either marking time or dropping off. The highly-touted production co-operatives, the pride of the Destour regime, are not real co-operatives. Yet they could serve as a point of departure in a genuine agrarian reform, boosting the productive forces in the countryside and concentrating the small and medium fellahin around the state farms. The government, however, sees them merely as links in its bureaucratic machine, herding in the poor peasants forcibly with extremely low wages and with no guarantee of employment. This pattern will not overcome the outdated traditional forms of farming or resolve any burning social problems. For example, 3,000 landowners north of the Tunisian range have as much land in their possession as 80,000 fellahin and middle peasants.

The unemployment problem is only mildly alleviated, for the mere 50,000 newly-created jobs are much too little, considering that 400,000 jobless were registered in 1961 and the demographic burst was not muffled sufficiently by the government-recommended technical means.

In the context of development, as we see it, the 'official scheme' falls short of the promises, and the modest results so far achieved have not impelled any real economic growth. Certainly, the scheme is no model for other countries to emulate. It is just one more creation along with the many others produced by the recently-free countries, which, though marked by a certain amount of industrialisation based

on a state sector, does not in any radical way alter the backward and unstable economic pattern.

Tunisia's foreign policy is profoundly negative, notably with regard to the Arab world, and has been pro-American ever since independence despite brief periods of non-alignment and the diplomatic, cultural and economic contacts maintained with the socialist countries. Recently, President Habib Bourguiba paid his first visits to Bulgaria and Romania, but his good initiative has in no way altered the orientation of Tunisia's foreign policy.

The government contends that its policy does not prejudice the country's independence, that it retains full freedom of action. All the same, it is damaging to the interests of other countries singled out by US imperialism as objects of aggression. Tunisia's official posture is a comfort to the United States, which has a big stake in the political role Tunisia could play in Africa and the Arab world. Official propaganda presents the Vietnam war as ideological, describing the US aggression as an act of 'self-defence'. This has isolated our country from the progressive Arab forces. Recently, Tunisia broke off diplomatic relations with Syria, and its relations with the United Arab Republic were always tinged with hostility towards President Nasser. Furthermore, whatever the government may say to the contrary, Tunisia has no real freedom of action in foreign affairs. Her relationship with the United States and West Germany has been particularly alarming since the outbreak of the Vietnam war. President Bourguiba paid visits to Johnson and Franco, reaffirming his pro-Western stand.

Our country's support of the United States, Spain and West Germany, the most reactionary of the capitalist states, is in itself intolerable, and, what is more, yields no benefits whatsoever. The national egoism at back of it is no justification. US imperialism is an enemy of all peoples, ours included, for the national-liberation movement is indivisible. Besides, the aid Tunisia gets from the West is no greater than the aid rendered to other countries far less closely related to the United States.

'CLASS HARMONY', STABILITY, REPRESSIONS

Official doctrine maintains that in Tunisia class struggle is non-existent, that classes coexist harmoniously and that the government serves the interests of all classes.

Our class structure differs from that of other countries, especially that of the industrially developed European states. But social classes and class contradictions are an objective reality.

The 'class harmony' myth collapses when it comes in contact with reality. The big landowners with their huge estates, exploiting farm

labourers and fellahin are no communist invention. Neither is the new bourgeoisie, growing fast in the private and state sectors, which has been stuffing its pockets ever since independence and elbowing out the old bourgeoisie associated with the colonial system. Now, the new bourgeoisie is seeing to its interests and privileges, fighting the working class and seeking to deprive it of its rights and gains.

It saw planning and state intervention as a merely temporary stage clearing the way for private enterprise, accepting them at first, but now protesting that state interference is going too far. That is borne out by the intrigues of the Right forces, who demand priority for the private sector. The government is meeting their wishes halfway and has, for a start, turned over such areas as tourism and the textile industry to the private sector. The official project submitted early this year to the National Planning Council described the 83 per cent increase in private investments as a government success.

The danger of the state sector being gradually turned over to private interests is very real, and doubly so, since the United States and West Germany are exerting continuous pressure in support of the private sector. On a visit to Tunisia, the President of the International Organisation of Employers expressed his conviction that state intervention should never be more than temporary, until private enterprise is strong enough to take over. Admittedly, the government does not bow to demands at first call; it is still in favour of planning and a state sector in the key economic areas, but merely out of considerations of expediency, not out of anti-capitalist convictions. By and large, it gravitates towards the new bourgeoisie to the detriment of workers and peasants, whose demands are ignored and whose opposition, when it bursts to the surface, is brutally suppressed.

The so-called harmony is camouflage for a policy which, though it may not totally accord with the aspirations of the new bourgeoisie, is ultimately aimed at promoting its long-term interests.

The same is true of stability, a popular theme of official propaganda after the series of *coups* elsewhere in the world. Speaking of the events in France, President Bourguiba declared that our country is well sheltered from the storms sweeping over other states. To be sure, Tunisia has had no change of regimes since independence, which is traceable to the Destour Party's influence and the popularity of the chief of state. Yet the government has had clashes with Rightist opposition trends that did not stop short at violence and assassination, from the Ben Youssef group (ex-General Secretary of the Neo-Destour Party, subsequently assassinated in Germany) to the conspiracy uncovered in 1963, whose main figures were executed.

Besides, there have been various Right and Left opposition trends

within the Destour Party. Earlier this year, N. Ahmed Mestiri, member of the Destour Party's Political Bureau and Minister of Defence, resigned with considerable publicity, charging the government with 'excessive collectivisation.' His act reflected the mood of the private sector. The resignation dissipated the illusion of unity in the Destour Party and lifted the veil on its insoluble concealed crisis. A few members of its Political Bureau and general secretaries of the trade union centre, the General Union of Labour, were expelled.

The Destour Party is an alignment of contradictory forces who came to terms with each other in the fight against colonialism, but hold divergent views about the country's future. True, the differentiation is still vague, no line has been drawn between Left and Right. They continue to coexist, albeit half-heartedly, in a united party, thanks, chiefly, to Bourguiba's personal prestige. But the struggle of clans and groups over the question of power, more acute at present in view of the President's ill-health, reflects divergent interests and class contradictions that may burst to the surface. The extreme Right is already working clandestinely to prejudice the planning policy, capitalising on its failures and on the discontent of the masses, who, rightless and fenced off from conscious participation in political and economic affairs, are incapable of assessing its failings and virtues. Also, there is a Left-wing national democratic opposition, which is expanding and enlisting increasing numbers of people in a movement of protest, as witnessed by the latest student strike and the workers' strikes held in defiance of the official unions.

As we see, idyllic appearances conceal anything but idyllic reality; struggles, contradictions, crises and problems. The government hopes to resolve, or at least head off, these problems by reprisals, stepped up since the one-party regime was established and the Communist Party and Left press were banned. All criticism, however constructive, and all opposition, however democratic, are treated as an insult to 'His Excellency.'

Student Ben Jennet was sentenced to twenty years of hard labour for taking part in anti-imperialist demonstrations and protests against the Israeli aggression. In solidarity with their colleague, the students declared a strike on March 15, demanding his release. The government responded with reprisals, involving the police and its henchmen. Shedding light on how the Tunisian leadership conceives democracy, M. Bahi Ladgham, General Secretary of the Destour Party, expressed his incomprehension of how Destour instructors could join the protest movement. 'It is deplorable,' he said, 'that people known for their allegiance to the regime, their loyalty to their profession, fell prey to doubt and participated in actions against the state. Some of them

even formed a group and went to the Dean to protest against the interference of party activists who merely wished to set the students straight.' He considered it natural that activists (actually henchmen of the authorities) should come to scold the students, that is, beat them up, while a perfectly natural protest to the Dean is qualified as a political crime.

After March 15th, arrests among students, instructors and lawyers rose into the dozens. Some, including lawyer Abdel-Hamid ben Mustafa, were flung into a prison in Tunis and will face a special tribunal. Others are kept at police stations. Communist Party activists in Sahel were detained at a Monastir police station for two months. Halib Attia, linguistics instructor, was smuggled out of a police cell by government agents and brutally beaten. Reinstalled in his cell on April 25th, he is still being detained for having dared to reply through *Le Monde* to charges made by a Destour leader. Essafi, a professor of medicine and member of the Vietnam Solidarity Committee, was also manhandled.

The reprisals have caused profound alarm in the country, and the efforts of the Destour leaders to justify them are in vain, though they spread false and vicious rumours and resort to various forms of anti-communism.

The Destour press endeavours to identify the Communists with the ultra-Leftist trends, although it is common knowledge that we oppose them. The Communists are accused of 'extreme dogmatism' for their reluctance to align themselves with the Destour brand of socialism.

The Communists do, indeed, refuse to be deprived of their right to criticise. But their stand towards the efforts of the ruling party has never been negative. They have tried to initiate a fruitful and constructive dialogue with the progressive forces in the Destour Party, but were invariably rebuffed by that party's inveterate anti-communism. And it is also true, of course, that the Communists do not consider Destour socialism as scientific and correct, although they welcome the fact that the Destour Party proclaims socialism as its ultimate aim.

CAN SOCIALISM BE DESTOURIAN?

The Destour ideologists (and others too) contend that the Marxist scheme is valueless outside the geographic and historical limits of modern industrially developed society, and hence inapplicable to the Third World countries, which constitute an entirely new phenomenon. They argue that scientific socialism came into being in Europe and that Karl Marx applied his method of analysis to capitalist society.

They say they are exponents of socialism, but their definition of it is incompatible with scientific socialism.

The ruling party of Tunisia conceived a Destourian socialism which it counterposed to scientific socialism. There is no element of analysis in it of the specific, original and special in phenomena. It consists of *a priori* ideological and political postulates which, in effect, deny the general and universal laws of social development.

Scientific socialism is universal, although its historical and geographical background was not. But that is true of every scientific discovery: it becomes universal, no matter in what latitudes and under what conditions it is made.

Socialism cannot be either Arab, African or Destourian. It is either scientific or nothing at all, and only in that capacity can it be creatively applied to the specific conditions of every country, acquiring a new, unique form of expression. This does not mean that we should take a sectarian stand either in regard to non-Marxist socialist trends (because they reflect socialism's immense power of attraction and may serve in certain conditions as transitional forms to scientific socialism, as, for example, in the case of utopian socialism) or in regard to policies pursued in the name of one or another form of socialism.

We may criticise incorrect ideological concepts and defend the scientific substance of Marxism, but should not indiscriminately repudiate everything emanating from other forces that declare themselves socialist; nor should we deny the possibility of their evolution. We know that most Third World countries are still in the phase of national-democratic revolution, in which variety of economic and political theories is inevitable. But to help work out a more definitive revolutionary-democratic attitude and assist the foremost social elements in broadening their concepts and outlook, they must be supplied an objective critical analysis of their basic theoretical tenets.

Like the other 'specific socialisms,' the Destour variety denies the existence of class struggle, thus denying the historical role of the working class and the peasants, towards whom it is hostile. The ideologists of the 'specific socialisms' trace the struggle of these classes for their demands to what they call an innate sense of hatred and revenge. Yet to grasp the situation in a country, to see its outlook, its difficulties and possibilities, one must first grasp the aspirations and the role of the different classes and social strata. Consequently, it is impossible to shape a policy of genuine growth, let alone growth towards socialism, and ignore the revolutionary potential and role of the workers and peasants.

By virtue of its class origins, Destour socialism does not aim at totally eliminating capitalist exploitation. All it wants is to contain

extreme exploitation. It reduces socialism to nationalisation, to establishing co-operatives, to certain limited state intervention in the economy. True, it has borrowed fairly important elements from scientific socialism, though in a formal way, and its other propositions are also borrowed. There is nothing original or Tunisian about them, for they are easily traceable to the works of the nineteenth-century thinkers, such as Proudhon, who denounced 'the spirit of hatred and revenge' of the proletarians and replaced contradiction by reconciliation, striving for a capitalism without its vices.

Unconcerned about the specifics, Destour socialism follows in the ideological tracks of bourgeois reformism, seeking to contain the revolutionary movement and either evade or quench the social contradictions.

It is a dual ideology, marked by eclecticism and a spectrum of concepts typical of the petty bourgeoisie carried to a position of power on the crest of the national-liberation struggle when the colonial system collapsed. The petty bourgeoisie casts about frantically for ways of developing its backward country, manoeuvring in face of the mounting class activity and trying to retain its guiding role, and is capable of overcoming the gravitation towards capitalist development. Compromise elevated to the rank of doctrine has national, historical and social roots.

Historically, it derives from the fusion of Destourian nationalism (which made the most of the contradictions of French colonialism and of the favourable circumstances to place itself at the head of the national-liberation movement) and the social-democratic reformism of the General Union of Labour. And socially, it derives from the ideology of the petty bourgeoisie in town and country, which wields considerable influence.

A technocracy, coupled with bureaucracy, is growing fast in the state sector, more concerned with its personal comforts and careers than with the needs of the country. A section of the petty bourgeoisie is gradually making common cause with the middle bourgeoisie, a differentiation process that obviously consolidates the latter's position. It is not surprising, too, that these sections dread the prospect of an extension of the national-liberation movement. We are witness to the fact that, given one and the same class basis, the petty bourgeoisie at the helm of power conducts a progressive policy in some countries and a policy anything but progressive in others. Its political orientation depends on the correlation of forces and classes, on social and political needs at home and on the country's international situation.

The social content of the national-liberation movement is, indeed, becoming deeper. Its present features and perspectives, while con-

firming the Marxist teaching and its infinite worth, need to be theoretically analysed anew. No longer is the movement oriented solely against imperialism. Nowadays, it also sets profound anti-capitalist aims.

This is indicated by the role of the working class and its Marxist parties, and by the evolution towards Marxism of the foremost elements graduating from the petty bourgeoisie and the nationalist-minded groups, and even by the very existence of progressive countries.

The main Marxist propositions concerning the role of the working class and the terms of transition to socialism are entirely valid for the Third World countries, though unquestionably in new forms. It is as essential in the circumstances to take the specifics into account and avoid a mechanical use of schemes applicable in Europe, as it is to reject all false "specificity." In his reply to Mikhailovsky, the Russian *Narodnik*, Marx emphasised that his analysis of capitalist development in Western Europe did not merit the honour of a universal theory of growth inevitable for all nations.

Lenin developed Marxist theory creatively, producing a scientific analysis of the motive forces, the character and perspective of revolution in backward countries. He pointed out, among other things, that backward countries may by-pass or cut short the capitalist stage of development on their way to socialism. And for the peoples of the Third World that proposition is of immense importance.

What is the precise meaning of the concept 'non-capitalist way' and its relation to the socialist way?

One may get the impression that the term 'non-capitalist way' stands for some third way or a new form of organising society. In effect, it is an option for recently liberated countries. It cannot be identified in letter and spirit with the socialist stage, but may lead to socialism, provided it is accompanied by definite qualitative ideological, political and social change. Past history shows that the tasks of the national-democratic revolution cannot be fully and consistently fulfilled under the exclusive leadership of the national bourgeoisie; only the more advanced forces representing the proletarian and non-proletarian sections in town and country, the petty and middle bourgeoisie, are up to that task.

The existence of progressive forces with a petty-bourgeois background, whose positions converge with those of the working class and its party, is a new feature in the Third World countries. No longer do they represent the interests solely of their own social stratum, but to some extent, also the interests of broader groups. We hear people admitting that these forces are progressive, but making the reservation that by reason of their petty-bourgeois origin, their mistaken and inconsistent political attitude, their role is limited and that they must

therefore give place to the Communists sooner or later.

It is indeed foolish to disregard the failings of these progressive forces, as the Middle East developments prove. And it is quite true, too, that no advance is possible until these forces mend their errors and shift decisively towards the workers and peasants. No less true is it that the rcle of the working class and the Communist parties, the truly revolutionary force, is growing steadily. But historical growth should not be seen simplistically, superimposing the abstraction of its results on its actual process.

The working class and its party are destined to lead the revolutionary movement in the transition to socialism. That is the rock-bottom Marxist concept. But it is also the result, not the starting point of the growth process, whose forms change from country to country and from one stage to another. The emergence and growth of the progressive forces is not fortuitous. A differentiation and stratification of the people occurs in the revolutionary process and the acute class struggle, weakening the positions and finally eliminating the Right element and radicalising the movement. Increasingly revolutionary socio-political forces with a volatile social basis have now forged to the forefront. Their total basis may change, paving the way in some countries to convergence between Communists and the most advanced element on a Marxist basis.

The Communists are aware of this historical possibility implicit in the national-liberation movement.

In Tunisia, by reason of a temporary relative weakness of the workers' and democratic movement and blinded by its all too modest and limited success, the ruling party refuses to see that its mass base is shrinking and its possibilities are exhausted, its methods and means inadequate. It is drifting towards inconsistent reformism, its path punctuated by continuous concessions to private capital, hostility to the people's demands, and rejection of deep-going structural social change. The regime is paring down the democratic freedoms and keeping progressive and popular forces from participating in the country's development.

It is high time to go over to other means, other methods, other policies, injecting new worth into the achievements of our country, making them more effective and setting the stage for an independent national economy, for higher standards of living, for the regeneration of Tunisia's prestige.

The farmers' production societies must be converted into real co-operatives run on a democratic basis by the peasants, who should be enlisted in the agrarian reform restricting large-scale landownership. The form of running state enterprises should be changed; the workers

should participate in their administration. A democratic policy should be initiated, giving freedom to communists and all progressive forces, repealing the ban on the Communist Party, granting autonomy to the trade unions, the student union, etc. Last but not least, American and West German patronage should be rejected. The communists are working for this policy. They know that popular pressure alone will alter the course of events and make a new line possible. And in this respect a most important role is to be played by the burgeoning progressive opposition forces. No longer is the Destour Socialist Party a single body; it is torn by intrinsic contradictions and the Right and reactionary forces no longer reign undivided in it. It is highly likely that elements comprising what could be called its Left wing will not tolerate their ambiguous position for long. They will break with opportunism and rebel against Right policy. They must realise that one cannot pursue a policy of growth and spurn democracy, spurn the conscious efforts of those social and political forces genuinely committed to economic, social and cultural progress. They must realise, too, that it is impossible to stem the onslaught of the Right while encouraging anti-communism and reprisals against the Left. And they must realise that the only way to end the uneasy situation in the country, to achieve growth, is to cease reprisals against the Left. This means an end to all persecution, release of all prisoners, cessation of arrests, liberation of all detainees at police stations, repeal of disciplinary and administrative sanctions against students and professors, and respect for the freedom of opinion and press.

In that case only will there be grounds for a real dialogue between all the progressive forces in the country, for effective struggle against the Right forces who will always strive to exploit the inconsistencies of the Destour reformists for their own ends and remove them from power when opportunity presents.

Nothing but a mass movement of workers, students, intellectuals and peasants can achieve a radical change in the correlation of political forces and bring into being a new bloc of all progressive groups respecting the independence of each in forms prompted by the concrete situation. This bloc could work out a new policy transcending the narrow framework of reformism, solidify the ties with the people and the progressives and lead the country to growth and democracy consistent with the true interests and traditions of our nation, the possibilities and specifics of our country and the aspirations of the forward-looking youth. What we need is a policy that will secure for our country real, profound, lasting achievements rather than 'superficial successes.' That will be a genuinely forward-looking policy.

AFRICA

Notes and Comments

J. J. JABULANI

Frelimo Congress in Mozambique

From July 20th to the 25th, 1968, F.R.E.L.I.M.O., the vanguard Mozambique movement for liberation, held its second congress.

This congress will remain in the annals of Mozambique's national struggle as one of the most important landmarks.

F.R.E.L.I.M.O. was founded in July 1962. The July Congress was therefore the first one to be held since then and the first to be held since the commencement of armed struggle on September 25th, 1964.

Further, whereas the first congress was held outside the country, the second was held inside Mozambique, in the liberated areas of Niassa province, thus permitting the participation of the popular masses in Mozambique.

By itself, this marks the great steps forward taken by the Mozambique struggle and the extent to which the Portuguese colonialists are suffering severe reversals. All the lying propaganda about how F.R.E.L.I.M.O. is not getting support from the people and how the Portuguese rely on them, apart from their own intelligence, to track down the patriotic fighters, has been effectively countered by actual events.

The facts are that for six days, nearly 200 delegates and observers met in Niassa to review the progress of the struggle and to determine its future course.

The delegates came from all the provinces of Mozambique. They represented all strata of the population, workers, peasants, chiefs, intellectuals and, of course, the popular army.

Almost the complete leadership of F.R.E.L.I.M.O., including the President and the Vice-President, Comrades Mondlane and Simango respectively, were present. There were also observers among whom were representatives of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation, the M.P.L.A., Z.A.P.U. and the A.N.C.

Yet the Portuguese 'security' failed to establish the location of the congress.

Reflecting the fundamental importance of the military struggle, the congress devoted a good amount of time to military questions.

Some of the difficulties experienced were reported on by the President when he spoke of:

> the scarcity of food, resulting in fighters spending days having little to eat and at times even eating nothing; shortage of clothes and shoes, causing many comrades to be dressed in rags, to do hard exercises, including cross-country runs and crawlings through thorny bushes almost naked and without shoes and with very irregular medical supplies. . . ."

A consistent dedication to the heroic national task has, however, led to a situation in which some of the cadres who underwent these

A scene from the Frelimo Congress. Photograph from the Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, 1 Antrim Road, London, N.W.3, whose new pamphlet "Mozambique—a country at war" is available at 1s. per copy.

experiences are now, in the words of the President, 'among the toughest units of the army and the political organisation of F.R.E.L.I.M.O.'

The Congress also discussed various problems concerned with the further development of the liberated areas. Among these were the programmes for Education and National Culture, for Social Assistance, for Production and for Commerce.

Evidence of the popular character of these programmes can be found in some of the clauses in the resolution on Education. This states that:

—a system shall be established which shall make it possible for the students to interrupt temporarily their studies in order to participate in teaching and illiteracy campaigns;
—it shall be the duty of all Mozambique students to take part, whenever it may be necessary, in the various tasks of the struggle for national liberation;
—development of schools of political training shall be promoted.

The Congress reviewed the support that the progressive forces throughout the world have given to F.R.E.L.I.M.O. This solidarity and support has again shown the importance of the world socialist system for the advancement of the progressive struggles of the African people.

The Mali Coup

On November 19th, 1968, the progressive government of Modibo Keita of Mali was overthrown in a military coup.

A 'National Liberation Committee' under Lieutenant Moussa Traore was then set up by the military junta. It was later announced that one of the officers, Captain Yoro Diakite, had been charged with the task of forming a government which would govern until 'free elections' could be held.

The military junta then proceeded to arrest Keita and other government and political leaders. The Sudanese Union (US), Mali's sole political party was banned together with all popular progressive movements including the people's militia.

These events came shortly after Mali's National Assembly had been dissolved. When this measure was announced, President Keita stated that both the Sudanese Union and the Assembly had fallen into the hands of 'middle-class' elements and were therefore not able to carry forward Mali's programme for complete national independence and the building of a popular democracy.

He promised that the Sudanese Union would be reconstructed so that its membership and leading bodies would be composed of workers, peasants, the revolutionary intelligentsia and other patriotic sections of society.

At about the same time students held mass demonstrations demanding that the armed forces be purged of those officers who had received their military training in France. (Traore, head of an army training-school in Bamako when the coup took place, was himself trained in France.)

It would appear that it was these officers who had imbibed many reactionary ideas, who effected the coup. They obviously felt that the rising popular tide of struggle against certain centres of reaction in the Mali state, government and army was threatening their entrenched positions in the army.

This latest coup against the progressive government in Mali underlines again the permanence of the threat to the security of various African governments. It is a situation that calls for vigilance, and the building up of mass revolutionary movements on correct ideological and organisational bases as the only guarantee that popular gains will be defended successfully. The army itself must be transformed to be composed of genuinely progressive sectors of the society, clearly understanding its task as that of the protector of the people against the intrigues of the imperialists, local reaction and against local adventurist groups.

Ghana: Tragi-Comedy and Renegacy

Registration of voters in Ghana began on September 8th last year. In the meantime, the army and police regime had set up a 150-member Constituent Assembly, the majority of whose members are nominated by the ruling 'National Liberation Council' (N.L.C.), to approve the new constitution. General elections are promised for later this year.

To try and ensure that 'subversives' do not get high positions in the government and the state apparatus, the N.L.C. had as early as January 1968 published a Public Offices Disqualification Decree.

The Decree imposes a ten-year ban from holding office on about 220 leading members of the former Convention People's Party (C.P.P.). (A number of offices in government, civil service, army, etc. are listed.) Kwame Nkrumah's name was among those that were posted in the first list of May 1968.

In consideration of the possibility that they might have listed some of these people 'unfairly', the N.L.C. then proceeded to set up an Exemptions Commission, headed by Mr. Justice Apaloo.

Those listed may apply for exemption and have to answer two questions to the satisfaction of the Commission. These are:

(1) were they forced to join the C.P.P. against their will?

(2) did they act in opposition to the Party or Nkrumah while members of the C.P.P?

What has happened since is in part a tragi-comedy and in part a disreputable spectacle of luckless renegacy on the part of people stretching out towards the spoils of office which they fear might be slipping them by.

One, Quaidoo, former Minister of Trade and Labour, applied for exemption. He stated that he had belonged to a 'secret opposition group' while pretending to be faithful to the declared purposes of the C.P.P. and the Nkrumah government. Quaidoo's application was refused. (Several former M.P.'s and other leading officials have suffered a similar fate.)

On the other hand, W. A. Waife's application was granted. *Inter alia*, he informed the Commission that as a business man he had been and is opposed to socialism 'except of the British or Swedish type'.

At the time of writing of this Note, Komla Gbedemah's petition was still being heard. He is a former Finance Minister.

He admitted to being part of a plot to remove Nkrumah hatched in 1961. (When he was charged with this then and when he subsequently went into exile, reactionary elements in many parts of the world pointed to this case as an example of how Nkrumah had gone mad. How could it be otherwise when he was sacrificing his 'right-hand man' who had been with him throughout the period of the building of the C.P.P. and Ghana's accession to independence!)

A. Casely-Hayford, former Minister of Interior, also applied for exemption. He was turned down.

Representative of the unprincipled scuttling was the application, later withdrawn, by B. A. Bentum, current secretary of the Trade Union Congress (T.U.C.).

In his confession he stated that he only became Minister of Forests (being brought back after he had been excised from the T.U.C. and the C.P.P. in 1964) with the consent of the 'inner group' in the army and police then working to overthrow Nkrumah. He had been in touch with this group before. On getting the government post, he acted as informer for Harlley, his 'friend and protector', now Commissioner of Police and Vice-Chairman of the N.L.C. After the coup, Bentum regained his position on the T.U.C. and is now occupied with building a 'truly democratic' trade union movement.

The evident unwillingness of the Commission to exempt too quickly has made some people withdraw their applications. Among these are, apart from Bentum, three former Cabinet Ministers and Professor W. E. Abraham, former pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana.

While all these men have been chasing canard reputations, the struggles of the people of Ghana have clearly shown the anti-popular nature of the military/police regime.

By admission of the country's own press, Ghana has had more strikes since the coup on February 24th, 1966, than during the whole period of Nkrumah's government.

The most recent of these was the railwaymen's strike last September. Unable to stem the nation-wide strike movement, the N.L.C. through Harlley, issued an ultimatum for the strike to end by September 6th. At the expiry of the time set, hundreds of workers were sacked.

The N.L.C. further resorted to charges of sabotage. Harlley also suddenly discovered that since the end of 1967, he had known of a plot to overthrow the N.L.C. through strike action.

While pondering these problems, Harlley also found himself faced with student action at the University of Legon, near Accra.

His police had moved into the University on October 22nd to disperse student demonstrations demanding the reinstatement of five students expelled earlier.

Confident in the security of the state power they hold, the police moved in brutally, beating some students unconscious and arresting others. The students would not be cowed. Those at Kumasi declared their support and their condemnation of police brutality. Legon was shut down on October 30th.

For the people, there is no desire to apply for 'exemption' from the glorious path of true national independence and social progress that many of Ghana's patriots, including Kwame Nkrumah adhered to.

The Congos and Pierre Mulele

On August 30th, in a general amnesty, Mobutu, President of Congo-Kinshasa, released a number of political prisoners. Among these was Tshombe's former Minister of the Interior in Katanga, Godefroid Munongo.

Hoping that this marked the beginning of a new phase in which he could work openly to pursue the objectives of the hero Patrice Lumumba, Pierre Mulele left his partisan base in Kwilu Province and crossed into Congo-Brazzaville on September 13th.

Justin Bomkoko, Mobutu's Foreign Minister, immediately made approaches to the Brazzaville government, Mulele's hosts, asking the latter to come back. Having assured Mulele and the Brazzaville government of his complete immunity from arrest and prosecution, Bomboko accompanied Mulele on the presidential boat to Kinshasa. They arrived there on September 29th. Among the people who received

Mulele was the Kinshasa chief of army who reiterated assurances of his safety.

Mulele was, however, arrested soon after. He was sentenced to death by a military tribunal on October 8th and executed the following morning at 5.30.

Brazzaville immediately broke off diplomatic relations with the Mobutu government. It charged Bomboko with 'barbarity and astonishing crimes'. It said the trip to various African countries made by Bomboko soon after the murder was 'a crusade of lies and calumnies'.

In a later statement the Brazzaville government said:

> We maintain our position concerning the termination of diplomatic relations in order to demonstrate to the world our attachment to international law and morality; we would not have protested if Mulele had died in the battlefield in his own country. But the subterfuge of the self-styled diplomat Bomboko . . . that we deplore.

Dismissing as a 'fable' the allegation that there were 'Mulelist camps' in the country and camps to train guerrillas to fight in Chad and the Central African Republic, the statement said, 'Congo Brazzaville has never harboured the idea of having satellites, even less to export her revolution'.

In the meantime, Mobutu denied that he had given his word of honour concerning Mulele's immunity. He expressed full confidence in his Foreign Minister, Bomboko. He said the amnesty applied only to political prisoners and not to 'war criminals'.

Castigating the rupture with Congo Brazzaville, he said it was 'a storm in a teacup', 'a matter of complete indifference' to him. In trying to camouflage the crime, he described Mulele as 'an agent of the left imperialism of China and Cuba' (Tshombe, in his view, was an agent of right imperialism).

With the conflict extending to other spheres of inter-state relations, Kinshasa, Chad and the C.A.R. (all U.E.A.C. countries—see The African Communist No. 35) boycotted a conference held in Brazzaville from October 14th to 17th. (The Conference was of E.E.C. countries and the eighteen African E.E.C. associate-member countries.) Further, Kinshasa threatened to reduce its status in O.C.A.M. to that of observer, all the while boasting that she contributes 22 per cent of O.C.A.M.'s budget. (It has, however, been confirmed that the O.C.A.M. conference due in Kinshasa in January 1969 will be held.)

The murder of Mulele, characterised by the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation from its headquarters in Cairo as 'a horrible crime' and 'political piracy' has exposed Mobutu's demagogy; for Mobutu had declared the year 1967 as the year of Lumumba, the national hero.

Pierre Mulele was Minister of Education in Lumumba's government. When Lumumba was murdered, allegedly in the presence of the same Godefroid Munongo mentioned earlier, Mulele sought to pursue the goals that Lumumba had.

He joined with Antoine Gizenga to form the Stanleyville-based government and to lead the Parti Solidaire Africain (P.S.A.).

In October 1961 he left for Cairo and returned to the Congo in July 1963. He then became one of the leaders of the popular armed uprising which Mobutu and Tshombe only managed to contain by inviting the imperialists to intervene in 1964 as well as by calling in white mercenaries.

There can be no doubt that Mulele was one of the inheritors of the great mantle of revolutionary struggle that Lumumba left behind. Yet Mobutu murders him and lets loose Lumumba's assassin, all the while claiming to honour Lumumba's memory.

Mobutu has been threatening to take retaliatory measures against 'a country' which he claims is allowing 'rebel activity' to be launched from within its borders.

The people of Congo Kinshasa have themselves already given the lie to this story. On November 11th Radio Kinshasa admitted that the armed fighters for liberation were again active, especially in Kwilu province. Army units were therefore mobilised to 'deal with them'.

The moral bankruptcy of Mobutu's regime is clearly represented in a statement issued by the Congo Kinshasa Ambassador in Algeria on October 19th in which he said: 'Every method is legitimate; the Congolese authorities used those which they believed most expedient to bring Mulele to Kinshasa.'

Algeria: Political Detainees Released

Last November 1st, the fourteenth anniversary of the beginning of the Algerian war of independence, the Algerian government released over 100 political prisoners.

Some of these, students, university lecturers and trade unionists were arrested during the summer of 1968 and belonged to various socialist organisations. The amnesty, however, made a distinction between those who engaged in purely political opposition and those who 'arrived to organise outrages and to cast the country into a state of civil war'. Those falling into the former group benefited from the amnesty.

An important development has also been the release of the leaders of the then Organisation de la Resistance Populaire (O.R.P.), arrested in the wake of the mass agitations for the release of Ben Bella in the

latter half of 1965. (The Ben Bella government was overthrown on June 19th, 1965.)

Bachir Hadj Ali, former general secretary of the Communist Party, is among those released. So also are Hocine Zahouane, ex-director of the journal *Revolution Africaine* and former member of the political bureau of the F.L.N., and Mohammed Harbi, close associate of Ben Bella, and former member of the Central Committee of the F.L.N. and general secretary of the revolutionary Provisional Government.

All are confined to one residence and require authorisation before they can freely enter the town of Algiers.

Others of their colleagues have also benefited from the amnesty.

Progressive forces throughout Africa in particular will hail the forward-looking stand that President Boumedienne's government has taken. We cannot but hope that Ahmed Ben Bella's release will also come soon and that again all the great heroes of the Algerian struggle will participate fully in the construction of a revolutionary Algeria.

Angola: The Passing of Dr. Americo Boavida

'While Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree will never be at peace.'

PATRICK PEARSE, Irish Republican leader, speaking at the grave of O'Donovan Rossa.

IN A STATEMENT issued at the beginning of September, the Mouvement Populaire de Liberation l'Angola (M.P.L.A.), announced the death of the comrade Dr. Americo Boavida.

As one with the Angolan patriots, united in and behind the M.P.L.A., this journal mourns the death of Comrade Boavida.

He died from wounds suffered when the Portuguese aggressors in Angola had undertaken saturation bombing of the M.P.L.A. base in Muie in the Mexico district. Helicopters and bombers were used in the raid.

When he died, Dr. Boavida was in charge of the M.P.L.A.'s Medical Support Service (S.A.M.) in the third region of the military zones.

Dr. Boavida was one of the few Angolans who managed to survive the repressive system of Portuguese colonial domination, in that he was able to qualify as a doctor at the Portuguese University of Oporto and to go on to specialise in gynaecology at the University of Barcelona, Spain.

Moved by the suffering of his people, Dr. Boavida helped found the Voluntary Corps for the Assistance of Angolan Refugees (C.V.A.A.R.). This was in Kinshasa in 1962. The organisation looked after the great stream of people that sought refuge in the Congo after being driven

out by the massive terrorist onslaught that the Portuguese colonialists launched against the Angolan people as a reprisal for their support of the M.P.L.A. which began armed resistance in 1961. (C.V.A.A.R. was banned by the Adoula government in 1963.)

In 1967, while working as a doctor and simultaneously fighting alongside the armed cadres, Dr. Boavida published the book, *Angola: Five Centuries of Portuguese Exploitation.* This publication represents an eminent contribution to the denunciation of the barbarity of Portuguese colonialism in Angola.

In all his work, Dr. Boavida put his learning and skills at the service of the popular struggle. His contribution to the liberation of the people of Angola marked par excellence the unity in action between the revolutionary intelligentsia and the workers and peasants of Angola.

When they laid his body to rest, Dr. Boavida's comrades pledged, as we do, to pursue relentlessly the struggle for national liberation, to punish the invaders and to revenge the great patriot, those who had died with him and those who had fallen in battle before.

Dr. Boavida was buried on September 27th, 1968, on Angola soil, among his fellow fighters for liberation.

Sudan—Students Clash with Rightists

IN THE FIRST week of November, serious clashes between students of the Democratic Front and members of the Muslim Brotherhood took place in Khartoum. One person died and twenty-five suffered injuries.

The clashes were provoked by the Muslim Brotherhood who interrupted cultural performances at the University of Khartoum where both men and women were participating simultaneously.

The extreme right Muslim Brothers, claiming that such actions were harmful to and derogatory of Muslim culture and traditions, moved in to break up the performances. As a consequence of the disturbances, the university was shut.

Students at the Egyptian University of Khartoum then took up the fight. They denounced the Muslim Brothers as 'fascists' and demonstrated against the government and the Governor of Khartoum for issuing an order forbidding demonstrations and public meetings.

In these demonstrations nineteen students were injured and twenty-six arrested. The Egyptian university together with other university establishments were then shut down by the government indefinitely on November 14th.

Operating as tight-knit group, the Muslim Brotherhood represents

one of the most reactionary groups in all the Muslim countries. (In Egypt they were involved in an attempted coup against the Nasser government in 1965. Some of their members who belonged to the Brotherhood's secret army are still being held.)

As a result of their provocations in the Sudan, elections to student representative bodies then due to be held within a few days, were cancelled. It was expected that the progressive sections in the student movement would emerge as the leading force.

Malawi—Banda's Territorial Claims

During the weekend of September 7th-8th, Banda demanded that Tanzania should 'return' four provinces in South Tanzania which, he claimed, were 'traditionally Malawian and had been stolen by the colonialists.' Later he made further claims for the ceding of Zambian territory to Malawi. Both President Nyerere and Kaunda have repudiated the claims and the latter has stated that diplomatic relations with Malawi cannot be established while Banda maintains his stand which Zambia views as hostile.

Banda repeated the claims, adding claims to Lake Malawi, at the National Conference of the Malawi Congress Party during the following weekend. He further said that Britain would supply him with three gunboats which would patrol the lake.

In the meantime it was reported that the Portuguese had naval vessels in the Lake which they were using against the F.R.E.L.I.M.O. fighters. Further, South Africa was also reported to have sent White doctors, surgeons and nurses to look after Portuguese soldiers wounded in the fighting along the Eastern shore of the Lake.

(Portugal spent £70 million on defence in the first six months of 1968. This represented an increase of approximately 25 per cent over the same period in 1967. Defence expenditure was 48 per cent of the budget in 1968 while in 1967 it represented 43 per cent. It has also been recently reported that Portugal is to increase its military strength in Guinea Bissao.)

South Africa was also making the news in this area in another sphere. The President of the city of Durban's Chamber of Commerce, in Malawi with a trade delegation, suggested that a Southern African common market, to include Zambia, should be formed. This would have a 'central secretariat' and would ensure 'co-ordinated use of resources to benefit all the countries involved.' He stated that Malawi had reacted 'very favourably' to the suggestion. The imperialist nature of this suggested 'common market' is quite clear.

These territorial claims underline the fact that the neo-colonialist government of Banda is not only an enemy of the struggling people of Southern Africa, but also constitutes an aggressive base directly threatening the very life of a number of independent African countries. It was with justice that Vice-President Rashidi Kawawa of Tanzania stated at a mass protest meeting in Dar es Salaam, on September 29th, that Rhodesia, Portugal and South Africa were behind Banda's territorial claims.

Taking advantage of apparent disunity among progressive African states, in part occasioned by the differences over the question of the Nigeria/Biafra war, the racist dictatorships got Banda to stake his claim at a time when Tanzania and Zambia were considered to be most isolated from the other states.

The purpose of Banda's action is twofold. In the first place, it is intended to divert Tanzania's and Zambia's attention from the fundamental question of supporting liberation movements in Southern Africa to one of the defence of the integrity of national territory.

Secondly, Banda hopes to use his bogus claims both as an excuse for openly inviting the South African fascists to give him military support and thus to use the claims as a way of threatening both countries into a position of subservience to the aggressive white minority dictatorships. The lessons to be drawn are very clear. A consistent and implacable struggle against Banda's neo-colonialist regime, in support of the progressive people of Malawi, is an urgent task of all the African states, particularly the independent states of Central and East Africa. Further, uncompromising and principled support must be given to the movements fighting for liberation in Southern Africa —F.R.E.L.I.M.O., M.P.L.A., S.W.A.P.O., Z.A.P.U. and the A.N.C.

There can be no short-cut to the guarantee of the security of the states of independent Africa: the way lies through the destruction of the fascist white minority dictatorships in the South, vigilance against the enemy's diversionary moves and the infiltration of its agents, and full and unwavering support to the liberation movements currently preparing and leading their people for the struggles ahead.

Any stand contrary to this, apart from hindering the just struggles of the people of Southern Africa, imperils the independence of the African states so basic to the progress of the ordinary working people of these countries.

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On October 23rd, the Malawi Supreme Court dismissed the appeals of eight people sentenced to death last June (see Africa: Notes and Comment, African Communist No. 34, 1968).

Ivory Coast—Workers Unite

At the end of October 1968, the working people of the Ivory Coast took an important step in the creation of an organised working-class movement.

The first Congress of the General Union of I.C. Workers (U.G.T.C.I.) met for five days in the capital, Abidjan.

In their deliberations, the delegates resolved to fight to defend trade unions, organisational and individual democratic rights, to create a 'dynamic' trade union movement, and to campaign for equal rights for women. The U.G.T.C.I. resolved not to affiliate to any international trade union organisation. M. Kone, the Minister of Labour, addressed the closing session.

Lesotho: C.P.L. Congress

The Communist Party of Lesotho held its Congress in Lesotho on October 5th and 6th.

Among various issues, the Congress met to discuss the Party's Draft Programme, 'The Lesotho Road to National Democracy'. Writing on the programme, Comrade J. M. Kena, General Secretary of the C.P.L., said that:

> (Among party members and the people as a whole) it is rightly regarded as the communist answer to the new wave of anti-communism that has erupted in the country recently and as a genuine programme of a people's revolution.
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> (*Majammoho*: Vol. 2, No. 9, September 1968.)

So great was the enthusiasm for a thorough discussion of the Draft Programme that the Congress could not complete discussion of it. This has therefore been reserved for a later conference.

In the resolutions that the Congress adopted, the C.P.L. envisages a vigorous campaign of struggle to defeat the neo-colonialist domination of Lesotho by the Leabua Jonathan government, to break the stranglehold of the South African fascists on Lesotho and her people and to establish the requisite conditions for the progress of the Lesotho people towards a full life.

The Congress was hardly over when the Jonathan government took action against the C.P.L. Its offices were raided by the police and various documents seized.

Faced with a situation in which the bankruptcy of its policies of subservience to the fascist Republic of South Africa is becoming clearer to the masses of the people, and in which the policies put forward by the C.P.L. are increasingly gaining in popularity, the

government first launched a violent anti-communist campaign, as Comrade Kena's statement above points out.

Obviously, propaganda was not having the desired effect. Hence the use of open terrorist measures against a revolutionary democratic movement such as the C.P.L. The government has also been threatening to ban the Party.

The people of Lesotho, already experienced in their knowledge of South African fascism, will resolutely reject all the manoeuvres of the Jonathan government to hand over the country to Pretoria imperialism.

The resolve of the Basotho workers and peasants to maintain their own vanguard organisation cannot be broken. The last Congress of the C.P.L. charted a path which is gaining greater acceptance of the ideas of and the struggle for socialism.

Equatorial Guinea—41st Independent State

On admission, Equatorial Guinea will be the forty-first member state of the O.A.U. Guinea, a Spanish colony since 1778, acceded to independence on October 12th, 1968.

Formed largely of the mainland enclave of Rio Muni and the island Fernando Po, Guinea has a population of 250,000 occupying a territory of 28,000 square kilometres.

This journal congratulates the people of Guinea on achieving independence and wishes the new government headed by President Francisco Macais Nguema and his governing party, the Popular Idea of Equatorial Guinea (I.P.G.E.) success in their efforts o wipe out the social, economic and political ills caused by two centuries of Spanish colonialism. In wishing the new government success, we may well note some points.

As with the rest of Africa, the new state inherits boundaries which are artificial. The population of Fernando Po is Bubi while that of Rio Muni, which constitutes two-thirds, is Fang.

Further, to meet its own requirements, Spanish colonialism developed these two parts unevenly in terms of economic production and the standard of life for the people. Already during the election campaign, certain reactionary elements in Fernando Po were raising a scare about 'Fang domination' and an alleged intention on the part of the Fang to 'exploit' Fernando Po. These elements therefore argued in favour of continued dependence on Spain.

Even given the limited extent of this experience, we are convinced that the history of independent Africa shows clearly the need in such cases for policies which respect the rights and equality of different

national groups within the country and for policies which aim at non-capitalist development and a continued vigilance against neo-colonialism.

Tunisia: Repression and Reaction

After being held for some time, 134 Tunisian students and intellectuals were brought before the Tunisian State Security Court and charged with engaging in subversive activities which threatened the security of the state. They were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from six to fourteen years on September 16th, 1968. One French citizen was sentenced to two years and the wives of six of the accused were given suspended sentences.

Basically the accused were charged with the 'offence' of holding and propagating various progressive political ideas. The prosecution divided the group into three sub-groups. One group was described as communist, organised around the paper *Espoir*. The other, organised around the Paris-published paper *Perspectives* was described as subscribing to views ranging from Marxist to Maoist and anarchist. The third group, whose trial was postponed *sine die*, was said to be Baptist and the government sought to show they were acting as agents or were connected with the Syrian government. Throughout the trial and after their conviction, the defence stated that the prosecution could not prove anything apart from the fact that, like other intellectuals elsewhere in the world, the accused were attracted to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and socialism. Despite this, the Tunisian court imposed heavy sentences. The purpose of the trial is nevertheless clear.

Before sentence was handed down, the Bourguiba government initiated public campaigns designed to condemn and isolate the accused, despite the fact that they could not reply to charges trumped-up against them. The National Assembly discussed the question and the government issued propaganda material in the form of a 'white book', in an attempt to discredit the accused and establish their guilt before they appeared in the courts.

By arresting these people, Bourguiba acted in an anti-democratic fashion. He hoped to destroy the popular resistance growing against his government's neo-colonialist policies, to strengthen reaction at home, to flirt with Zionism and further to entrench French domination over Tunisia.

Further confirmation that the Tunisian government was intent on persecuting the imprisoned lies in their transfer from the prison in Tunis to Bizerta where they have been held incommunicado. Various

punitive measures, such as denying them urgent parcels, have been imposed.

On October 15th, most of the prisoners went on hunger strike to protest against the persecution of their families who had themselves committed no offence.

In the wake of these events, at the end of October, Bourguiba and Bahi Ladgham, secretary to the President, visited France for discussions with de Gaulle and the French government. Later, in the National Assembly, Bourguiba quoted de Gaulle's slogan for the discussions approvingly:

'Let us forget the past, let us turn over a new page and let us look to the future. What is important now is the future.'

Thus Bourguiba continues to combine a policy of repression of the most patriotic elements at home with further submission to French machinations.

It is in the interests of the Tunisian people that the detained people are released and democratic rights accorded to all to pursue a struggle for the genuine national independence of Tunisia.

Uganda: 'Socialist Inspiration'

The October treason trials in Uganda reflected the determination of the Obote government to retain vigilance against the sort of instability which has plagued so many African governments since independence. Three men were convicted and sentenced; one, Ernest Mayanja for life and the others eight years each. Three other men and a woman were acquitted. The atmosphere was such that the Commander of the Armed Forces, General Idi Amin, felt compelled to deny rumours of an impending military coup.

Nevertheless, President Obote stoutly reaffirmed the importance of socialism for Africa. In a speech at his former college on November 6th, he said:

> I think that, as we prosper, the new plans based on Conference resolutions of the Party (the Uganda People's Congress) will have a socialist inspiration. What has been achieved in six and a half years with aid from the Eastern countries is not less (than that which derived from) our association with Britain for sixty years.

STUDENTS IN REVOLT

Alexander Sibeko

AN IMPETUOUS NEW FORCE has swept to the fore in the leading capitalist countries. Students are in revolt. With American cities in flames, France torn by strikes, Imperialism routed in Vietnam, it is not surprising that young people are entering the political arena on the side of the working class and the forces of progress. The discontent of youth has its most vocal expression amongst students, and the spectacular upsurge of rebellion this year has scarcely left a major university untouched.

The student protests are by no means confined to the metropolitan countries.[1] The students of the colonial and dependent countries have always been a militant force in the struggle for national liberation

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[1] Indeed, the fever even seems to have spread to some socialist countries, namely Prague, Warsaw and Belgrade. Numerous are the pronouncements in the West that the student movement transcends distinctions of capitalism and socialism, and is a universal rebellion against the 'authoriarian' regimes in all countries. R. Palme Dutt has dealt with the problem as follows: '. . . Yes. Students are demanding democratic reform of the universities also in socialist countries as well as in capitalist countries. . . . Are the students in the socialist countries demanding the replacement of socialism by capitalism? Not at all. . . . In Belgrade, where there has been the nearest approach to the superficial appearance of resemblance, with occupation of university buildings, they are denouncing what they regard as concessions to capitalism and departures from socialism. . . . All students are agitating for democratic structural advance in the running of the universities. But when it comes to the existing social order, the students in the capitalist countries are agitating for the destruction of the existing capitalist social order and the establishment of socialism. The students in the socialist countries are agitating for the improvement of the existing socialist order and the defence of socialism against the menace of any concessions to capitalism.' (*Labour Monthly*, 'Notes of the Month,' July, 1968).

against imperialism. In recent months the students of Senegal, Tunisia, Chile and Mexico, like their compatriots in Paris, Rome and West Berlin, have occupied their universities and clashed with the police. In South Africa student demonstrations, culminating in the courageous defiance at Fort Hare, have infuriated the apartheid regime.

Just how important a social force are students in the struggle to change the world? In some quarters students are elevated to the position of 'the true revolutionaries' who have the potential to 'activate the passive masses,' whether they be the working class of the advanced countries or the rural peasantry of the Third World. Others react against their ultra-left tendencies and regard students as getting in the way of the serious business of mass struggle. Do students have a role to play? What is the character of the student movement and its relation to the other social forces in the struggle? What has given rise to the phenomenon of student rebellion we are witnessing today? Let us attempt to answer these questions by examining the student movement in the arena where it has gained so much publicity: the advanced capitalist countries.

STUDENTS IN THE ADVANCED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

The post-war generation of youth in the Western World has shown an unprecedented cultural and political restlessness that is an aspect of the general crisis of capitalism. Infants of the cold war they have graduated to adulthood amidst a traumatic breakdown of illusions and promises. The paradise of 'new' capitalism, its economic miracles and stability, its opportunity and morality, has disintegrated before their eyes. The anger of the working masses, as evidenced by the record number of strikes and demonstrations in defence of hard-won economic gains, and the rage of the Black people of America struggling for freedom, is keenly felt by the youth. They have grown up in a world in which imperialism is no longer the dominant force, a world in which the forces of socialism and national liberation are gaining the ascendancy. The rebellion of youth and students is an expression of this sharpening class struggle.

For the first time Europe, America and Japan, have produced a politically left, *mass-based*, student movement. At one time the universities were the preserve of the sons and daughters of the rich, who were educated in the art of 'being superior' and prepared for their élitist role of officering and administering society and empire. The University as an institution has its origins in the Middle Ages. Clearly its function in a class society, is not to serve the interests of the people,

but those of the state, and thus the ruling class. With the rise to power of the bourgeoisie the universities played a considerable role in the justifying theories of liberal bourgeois democracy, and the institutions of private property and the free market economy. The universities assiduously continue to inculcate this tradition, and to bolster bourgeois consciousness. They have as a major preoccupation the ideological refutation of Marxism, and are engaging in research for the industrial-military complex; in the study of industrial psychology (i.e. how to intensify labour and minimise workers' resistance), in the military field, and in the policy of counter insurgency.[2] It is in this bastion of bourgeois ideology that students are raising such hell! As West German students say: 'Beneath those academic gowns lie the dust of ages.'

CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE UNIVERSITIES

Today, in response to the demands of monopoly capitalism and the 'technological revolution,' the universities are being expanded at the expense of real education and assume the character of 'knowledge factories.' More and more graduates are required to fill high-grade, white-collar positions in modern scientific-based industry. As a result a population explosion has taken place in the universities and the major beneficiaries are the middle and lower-middle classes. The class structure of education continues to deny to large numbers of young people, particularly those of working class or peasant-farmer background, access to higher education. Although the working class constitutes the majority of the population only a minority of students of working class origin enter the universities, as the following table indicates:

University students are no longer the pre-bourgeoisie of the past, automatically eligible for a privileged post in society. The bulk of students are entering the market for labour power, as engineers, scientists, teachers, salaried doctors, office employees, technicians and specialists. This is taking place in a market that is subordinate to the laws of monopoly capitalism. Thus the 'technological revolution' is bringing to an end the existence of an independent middle class in the

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[2] The U.S. strategic hamlets programme used in Vietnam was drawn up by social scientists at Michigan State University. 'Operation Camelot' was a research project run by University of Pittsburgh anthropologists which accumulated material to provide the strategy for counter-insurgency tactics in Latin America. In Britain, Essex University students occupied their buildings after protest demonstrations over a visit by a scientist from the sinister Porton Downs Research Establishment, which experiments in germ warfare and other hideous weapons. Students claimed that the University was associated with Porton.

University 'Explosion' and Students of Working Class Origin

		No. of Students	Working Class b/g[5]
U.S.A.[3]	1950 1964	2.3 m 5 m	10%
BRITAIN	1950 1963	133,000 210,900	25%
FRANCE[4]	1950 1964 1967	139,600 455,111 600,000	8%
WEST GERMANY	1950 1963	122,668 342,700	5%
WEST BERLIN	1950 1963 1967	12,000 31,000 40,000	5%
ITALY	1950 1964	191,790 261,358	
JAPAN	1950 1963	390,000 916,600	
AUSTRIA			5%
DENMARK			10%
SPAIN	1967	100,000	1%

Note: student populations up to 1964 based on Unesco figures

[3] In most U.S. colleges tuition fees exceed $3,000 a year, amounting to what a skilled worker earns in four or five months.

[4] In France the proportion of students of working-class origin in the univercities is one-fifth of that of workers in the population, while students from 'executive personnel' families are represented by a number almost six times as great. The figure for students of working-class and peasant backgrounds is 12 per cent.

[5] Compiled from *World Marxist Review*, issues seven and eight, July and August 1968, reporting the conference 'Upsurge of the Youth Movement in the Capitalist Countries,' held in Prague, June 12th-13th, under the auspices of the journal. The figure for Britain is derived from the 'Kelsall Report.'

advanced capitalist countries. This stratum is becoming of increasing importance in modern society, so much so that the political line of many communist parties are now based on the thesis of an 'alliance of the forces of labour and culture.' Thus the central conflict of capitalist society, first revealed by Marx a century ago, is as relevant as ever; the increasingly social nature of production as contrasted to the appropriation of capital in fewer and fewer hands. The new stratum of wage earners, the technical intelligentsia the students are likely to join, is becoming 'proletarianised'; the students and intellectuals are being forced down to the level of the working class. With the growing concentration of production and developing state monopoly capitalism, they become objectively anti-capital and anti-monopoly. The French Communist Party, in an appeal to intellectuals, pointed out that under monopoly capitalism, conditions exist

> 'which unite manual workers and intellectuals against a regime which refuses them all participation in the economy, in the formation of policy and in the creation of a living culture.'[6]

These laws of capitalism which dominate the educational system have profound repercussions within the universities and technical colleges. Requirements of the profit motive create the conditions for mass student issues. Students are rushed through their courses, to make way for other students, on a conveyer-belt system very similar to the speed-up in industry. The tremendous overcrowding, poor facilities, absence of an adequate system of grants and living allowance, and the punishing examination system which resembles an obstacle course, make student life extremely arduous. The bias in student selection, unfair assessment of capability, ill-conceived curriculums, anxiety over future prospects, are other potent issues.[7] Add to this the strictly authoritarian principles which hamper educational progress, and the physical hold which monopoly capitalism exercises over every major university, through the Board of Governors or University

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[6] Political Bureau statement, May 12th, 1968.

[7] Compare this to the educational structure of the socialist countries, which is based on the needs of the people and the requirements of progress, with education dominated not by authoritarian principles but by the spirit of collective research. Socialist youth have the right to education, from elementary school to university, free of charge, with students benefiting from adequate government allowances. In the Soviet Union there are 4,500,000 students in 787 universities and institutes; in Czarist Russia 70 per cent of the population was illiterate. In addition there are many evening and external students, and in 1967 there were 5,200,000 college graduates in all; of which 2,700,000 were women. Because education is open to all and is State assisted, by the end of the current five-year plan more than 8,500,000 will graduate.

Council, and the result is the explosion of campus mutinies.[8] Initially the outbursts, based on the students' everyday needs of study, are against the outmoded and autocratic educational system, but far more than the academic peace is shattered.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENT STRUGGLE

Side-by-side with activity centred on the university has grown the challenge to capitalism. As with the workers who are won for the wider political struggle initially through demands based on their work and living conditions, so the grievance of the students merges with the political struggle of the working class. Protests against high-handed reaction by college authorities, and police brutality on the campuses, has developed into protests against the authoritarian rule of the bourgeois state. A rejection of 'ivory tower' concepts in the university has been coupled with a growing concern about social values and justice. Demands for academic reform and democratisation have become charged with demands for radical social change and the revolutionisation of society. Growing numbers of students are beginning to see their problem not merely as one of university reform; as U.S. students put it, 'you cannot free the university without freeing society.'[9] A socialist consciousness is in the making.

Students' discontent finds concrete expression through their earnest involvement in the popular struggles being waged against reaction in the capitalist countries. Together with the working youth they play a vital role in almost every movement. They often initiate unique forms of activity and display a readiness to struggle that is sometimes lacking amongst other sections of the population. Since the early nuclear disarmament days, the movement has become more widespread and dynamic, acquiring a pronounced political character, undoubtedly given impulse first by the Cuba crisis, and now by the burning issue of Vietnam. Vietnam is the most powerful political stimulant of all!

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[8] For example, the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the University of California is the President of the Bank of America. The unrest at Berkeley began when the university attempted to ban anti-racial demonstrations against a local newspaper. The students were only later to discover that the publisher of the paper was a member of the Board of Governors of their own University. The Board of Governors of Columbia University, New York, is dominated by huge military contractors and large land-owning corporations such as the Rockefeller concerns, Chase Manhattan Bank, and the First National City Bank. The crisis which inflamed Columbia early this year grew out of two issues; the expansion of University property at the expense of Negro homes, and the attempts to force the University to end its military research programme.

[9] *World Marxist Review*, July 1968, from the contribution to the discussion on 'Youth' by M. Hallinan (Communist Party, U.S.A.).

Everywhere students are an energetic force in the universal solidarity movement with the people of Vietnam. In America they play a considerable role in the 'stop-the-war' movement, as they do in the movement for Black liberation. In West Germany and West Berlin they are militant, and highly skilled, opponents of the reactionary emergency laws, militarism and neo-nazism. In Japan they demonstrate against American imperialism, and in Spain against Franco. In France they have come into a direct clash with state power. In Britain they are the first to demonstrate against racism and Rhodesia. More and more, students all over Western Europe are seeking to identify with the working class struggle against monopoly capitalism and the reactionary governments serving the interests of big business; in France and Italy they have succeeded to a remarkable degree. From the Third World they gain much of their inspiration; the heroism of Che Guevara, the N.L.F. of Vietnam, and the Southern African freedom fighters, have won a lasting place in their hearts.

What emerges is that the students do not struggle for their own interests in isolation, but are affected by world events:

> 'in the final analysis by the struggle which the three great forces of the world revolutionary movement—the socialist countries, the national liberation movement and the working class of the capitalist countries—are carrying on,' as was pointed out at the *World Marxist Review's* conference on 'Youth' by Pierre Hentges, French Communist Party.[10]

STUDENTS AND WORKERS

Around the protest movement has grown a cult of 'the student revolutionary.' Cultivated by bourgeois mass communications media, opportunistic politicians and various shades of academics and Leftist groups, the 'cult' questions the essential point of Marx's doctrine; the historic role of the working class. Particularly fashionable is Professor Herbert Marcuse's[11] theory of the elite: students (and other 'outcast' groups such as the Colonial people and Black Americans) are the revolutionary force of our age, whilst the working class is integrated into the capitalist system and has lost its revolutionary potential. All this at a time when the upheavals in France have given the lie to the illusion that Western Europe is no longer a centre of struggle, that the working class is in 'hibernation'! The strength and scale of working class struggles over the recent period, its capacity to create effective alliances with wider sections of the people, testify to

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[10] *World Marxist Review*, July 1968.

[11] German born, member of the Social Democrats in the twenties, settled in the U.S.A. in 1937, worked for the Government *Office of Strategic Services* during World War II, lectures widely in America and Western Europe; doyen of the 'New Left.'

the fact that the working class is the basic revolutionary force of our age. This is fact and not fancy, because the working class suffers most directly from capitalist exploitation, it is the class which is deprived of all ownership of the means of production. As the *Communist Manifesto* declared: 'the working class is the revolutionary class par excellence, because with the socialist revolution it has nothing but its chains to lose and a world to gain.'

TRUE REVOLUTIONARIES

To return to the problems of the student movement, specifically those of the Leftist tendencies among the revolutionary students. explaining why students in France (May-June 1968) gave way to the temptations of Leftist opportunism, Waldeck Rochet, General Secretary of the French Communist Party stated:

> . . . In order to understand what has happened one cannot leave out of account the social composition of the student body, and the classical teachings of scientific socialism in this respect cannot be considered as out of date. Again and again Marx and Lenin have warned us against the propensities of the lower middle class, especially the intellectual lower middle class, to phrases and poses which are ultra-revolutionary, anarchistic and psuedo-romantic.[12]

We have referred to the social composition of university students, let us now take a close look at the manner in which the university milieu exacerbates their petty-bourgeois psychology and gives rise to adventuristic political consequences.

In the first place students are not a stable, homogeneous social group, but are in a constant state of flux, undergoing a complete turnover in their ranks every three or four years. Coming as they do from the middle stratum the political experience they might have is derived from the university years. They do not easily see the progressive role they may play as intellectual wage-earners once they have completed their studies, and fear that they must inevitably 'fall out of politics' and into middle class mediocrity. This leads to impatience and a yearning to 'make the revolution' whilst they are 'in the running.' It is an exaggeration to claim that all students are progressive or militant, just as it is fallacious to claim that only a handful of agitators are responsible for disruption. Large sections prefer to immerse themselves in the highly individualistic nature of study, content to pursue their course as best they can in the unsatisfactory circumstances provided, with their minds set firmly on future careers. This is evidenced by the conservative leadership of many student unions; and is aided by the

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[12] From a speech to the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, meeting at Nanterre, July 8th-9th, 1968.

scorn militants reserve for formal organisation as well as by the extreme poses they strike, which isolates them during inactive periods from the student mass. When suitable issues arise however, issues which come readily alight and directly affect the interests of all students, (and university activity only becomes forceful when this occurs), the militants are invariably in a position to assume leadership and give expression to the discontent. When students are thus aroused the success of their action is less dependent on the discipline, organisation and majorities so fundamental to working class struggle. When workers strike the effectiveness of their action is wholly dependent on their unity and on the unanimous nature of their decision, whilst in a university (of say 10,000 students) if one-tenth of the students decide to stage a sit-in, they are capable, as we so often see, of holding the authorities to ransom. Strike action by workers is a very complex operation; there is the wage to forego, the possibility of losing the job, the family responsibilities; the situation of students is not comparable, although this is not to say they risk nothing, nor to question their undoubted courage.

It is this background to student life which serves to explain why the surrealist fringe of 'Maoist,' Trotskyist, and anarchist factions, all heatedly contesting to be 'the authentic voice of revolution' are able at times to attract thousands of students to their position. This has harmful consequences in the wider political arena, which can bring the student movement into conflict with the working class, trade union movement, and communist parties.

The relative ease with which the 'way-out-lefts' find they can direct their fellow students, leads them to short-cuts and adventures, when they believe that workers will respond as students do. Unable to reconcile themselves to the long, drawn-out battles of the class-struggle (the daily involvement of workers in winning better conditions is disdained as 'selfish material desire') they resort to senseless provocations hoping to lure the workers into a spontaneous confrontation with the state. Given to romanticism they believe a revolutionary situation can arise out of each and every strike or demonstration, and ignore the need for a correct assessment of a situation, for exacting preparation and strict discipline. In small groups they often attach themselves to large demonstrations, such as over Vietnam, and resort to reckless actions which only succeed in diverting attention from the real issues. Their contempt for the majority is exposed when they fail to appreciate the necessity for winning the mass of the people in order to advance the struggle. They play into the hands of the ruling class whose attitude is to provoke the exasperation of the students by police violence, so as to arouse the fear of the population and

turn them towards the power that would save them from anarchy; as de Gaulle has momentarily succeeded in doing in France. Flattered by those who seek to turn them from the working class, the 'Leftists' hurl abuse at the Communists Party, whilst denying that they are anti-communist. The Party is labelled 'Traditionalist', equated with 'the Establishment,' accused of having a vested interest in the status quo, and of 'betraying the Revolution.' Adopting 'more revolutionary than thou' postures, the old and familiar attacks of these 'New Lefts,' are aimed chiefly at the concepts of Leninism, and have had a thorough airing in the recent French crisis.

It will serve us well, the ultra-left more so, to quote from Lenin:

> . . . True revolutionaries have mostly come a cropper when they began to write 'revolution' with a capital R, to elevate 'revolution' to something almost divine, to lose their heads, to lose the ability to reflect, weigh and ascertain in the coolest and most dispassionate manner at what moment, under what circumstances and in what sphere of action you must act in a revolutionary manner, and at what moment, under what circumstances and in what sphere you must turn to reformism.

Revolution is not just a shout of anger or the building of barricades, which is a great deal easier than sustained work among the masses. 'The hollow phrase,' the 'shouting by way of revolutionary spirit,' 'the caricature of communism'; these are the terms Lenin used to characterise the petty-bourgeois leftists who after 1905 wanted to renounce all parliamentary work and all possibility of using legal means in Russia.

THE WAY FORWARD

The student movement has its positive aspects and its undoubted weaknesses, its successes and its numerous difficulties. Although the situation in the universities does not at present make for the emergence of a particularly stable and well-organised force, the student revolt is significant, welcome and healthy. Whatever its defects, these should not conceal the fundamentally progressive nature of the movement, for what the students are actually fighting against (even though they may not understand the correct methods of struggle) is the capitalist system. Luigi Longo, General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party, has observed:

> Of late the university has become the field of lively and passionate collisions between most varied ideas and positions. Fighting for its demands within the framework of the university order, the student movement has produced a unique form of struggle against the system and has raised issues related to strategy and tactics. We must admit that in concrete terms it has shaken the country politically, and has great positive value because it has proved to be a movement undermining the social system.[13]

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[13] From *Rinascita*, May 3rd, 1968.

The 'Leftism' of the student movement remains its greatest source of weakness, an obstacle to the natural merging of the student struggle with the working class struggle. To achieve this fusion is not only a necessity for the student movement if it is to grow and realise its enormous potential, but also for the communist parties. George Marchais, secretary of the French Communist Party Central Committee, emphasised the need for this unity when he wrote in *l'Humanité* at the end of April, 1968:

> While the working class must play the decisive role in the fight for progress, democracy and socialism, it cannot achieve its aims alone. It needs allies. The students and the youth generally are among those necessary allies.

What the unity of these forces can mean was dramatically illustrated in France on May 13th, when ten million workers went on strike and hundreds of thousands of demonstrators marched through Paris behind the banner: 'Workers, Teachers, Students as one.'[14]

The students will overcome the ultra-left distortions of their movement in the company of the mass working class upheavals that are on the order of the day in Western Europe; in the heat of these battles the first casualties will be romanticism and psuedo-theories. In the course of the struggle the limiting hold of anti-communism is weakened, based as it so often is on ignorance and confusion. Students will learn through their own experience the true nature of the communist parties. In this respect the Parties of Portugal, Spain and Greece, operating as they do under the most difficult conditions, have over the years been seen by students as the most consistent revolutionary force.

The political thinking of students is influenced by the cold war propaganda they have experienced all their lives, and finds particular expression in hostility towards the socialist countries; the Soviet Union above all. This is an extremely harmful attitude because Imperialism, seeing in the Soviet Union its most formidable opponent, takes the greatest pains to distort the true revolutionary meaning of Soviet achievements in every sphere; in building communism, in developing science and technology for progress, in creating conditions of peace, in defence of socialism, and in rendering decisive and unflinching aid to the socialist countries, the national liberation movement, and the world anti-imperialist struggle. Those who doubted this role are seeing in Vietnam, as they witnessed in Cuba, the special significance of the Soviet Union for the world revolutionary process; at the same time the reactionary and aggressive nature of U.S. imperialism, the

[14] Following the brutal suppression of a student demonstration by the C.S.R., the hated riot-police, on May 10th-11th.

NATO block, and West Germany, is increasingly exposed. The struggle against 'Leftism' is a struggle in defence of the Party and the revolutionary movement. It is not a struggle to tether the student movement, but to bring it closer to the working class. The success of the student movement is directly dependent on the degree to which it is based on the working class struggle and the struggle of the Communist Party. As a participant in the *World Marxist Review* conference pointed out:

> What Lenin said in 1901 fully applies to the present situation: The student came to the aid of the worker. It is now the turn of the worker to go to the aid of the student.[15]

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A further article, dealing with the development of the student movement in South Africa, will appear in our next issue.

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[15] From the contribution of W. L. Becker (Communist Party of Germany), *World Marxist Review*, July 1968, No. 7.

COMINTERN

Terence Africanus

The First International laid the foundation of the proletarian, international struggle for socialism.

The Second International marked a period of preparation of the soil for the broad, the mass spread of the movement in a number of countries.

The Third International has gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, discarded its opportunist, social chauvinist and petty-bourgeois dross, and *has begun to implement* the dictatorship of the proletariat.

V. I. LENIN: *The Third International and its Place in History* (April 1919).

THE FIRST QUARTER of 1969 sees the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment (March 2nd, 1919) of the Communist International—sometimes called the Third International or abbreviated to 'Comintern.'

The Comintern was established as the successor to the First International (International Workingmen's Association, 1864-1872), founded by Karl Marx and the Second International (1889-1914) which collapsed ingloriously at the outbreak of the 1914-1918 war, when the leaders of the West European Social-Democratic parties, who were its main affiliates, basely betrayed the promises they had made to oppose the war, each supporting 'their own' capitalist governments.

The foundation of the Communist International is inseparably bound up with the name of its chief architect, the great Russian revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, inspirer and leader of the Great October Socialist Revolution. It was in Moscow in the heart of the world's first socialist state of workers and peasants that the foundation Congress of the Comintern was held, and that remained its headquarters throughout its existence. So it is natural and inevitable that the International's history is closely bound up and associated with the Soviet Union whose stormy birth in 1917 gave it such enormous

impetus and inspiration that today, a brief half-century later, sees the present-day world Communist movement as incomparably the most dynamic and successful mass movement ever known.

Yet it is quite incorrect, as often assumed, to suppose that the Comintern was mainly a 'Russian' organisation.

By its nature—as expressed most precisely in Marx's slogan 'Workers of the World, Unite!'—the labour movement is an international one, transcending national and continental boundaries. Internationalism is a concept that requires more than occasional messages of solidarity and slogans; it needs to find a practical organisational form, such as the three 'Internationals' to which reference has been made above, and such as the world meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in 1957 and 1960 and the new conference under preparation in Moscow for May 1969.

The need for the establishment of the Third International sprang directly out of the collapse of the Second. Already in November 1914—three years before the October Revolution and immediately after the outbreak of the first world war—Lenin was writing:

> The Second International is dead, overcome by opportunism. Down with opportunism, and long live the Third International, purged not only of turncoats . . . but of opportunism as well.
>
> —*Collected Works*, Vol. 21.

Nor was Lenin the only one who saw at that time, in the disintegration of the Second International, not the failure of internationalism as such, but the need to rebuild it on sound, Marxist, revolutionary and working class principles. Like Lenin, revolutionaries like Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in Germany, Dimitrov in Bulgaria, and many others had long denounced the selling out of the workers by the ambitious parliamentarians and careerist trade union bosses who headed the Parties of the Second International. They were not surprised when these gentlemen—representatives of that upper stratum of workers in the imperialist countries who had been bribed by a share in the super-profits of colonialism—joined up with their own exploiters in militarism and flag-wagging. The sell-out of 1914 was the culmination of a long series of acts of betrayal—of the colonial peoples, of the majority of the workers, of the rights of women and minorities, of internationalist and working class principles.

Though many of these 'labour lieutenants of the capitalist class' professed to be Marxists, they in fact did their very best to emasculate Marxism by depriving it of its revolutionary content, by making Marx and Engels out to be some sort of pacifists, by burying Marx's revolutionary concept of the dictatorship of the working class as the only possible alternative to the present dictatorship of the capitalist class,

on the road to the classless and stateless Communist society of the future.

The 1914 betrayal was the culmination of a long series of sins. But just because it was so glaring it showed up these traitors for what they were to honest revolutionaries and to millions of working people all over the world. That was why, even before the October revolution, the concept of a Third International of a truly revolutionary and principled character, was in the air everywhere.

In South Africa too the revolutionary section of the Labour Party had formed the International Socialist League—forerunner of the Communist Party—in 1915. Headed by militants like Ivon Jones, W. H. Andrews and S. P. Bunting, they fought against South Africa's participation in the war, and though cut off by distance from their comrades overseas, were reaching out for fresh internationalist ties.

It is just this background which helps to explain why the establishment of the Comintern was greeted enthusiastically by revolutionaries, including our own I.S.L. in all five continents.

AGAINST OPPORTUNISM

Down with opportunism! Lenin had exclaimed writing about this very theme in 1914, and from the start the Communists were determined to see that their international movement should be 'purged of' this deadly disease.

Briefly the sin of opportunism in revolutionary politics consists of sacrificing the permanent, long-term interests of the working class for some temporary or sectional advantage. It can take different forms at different times and different circumstances.

In developed capitalist countries where the working people enjoy certain bourgeois-democratic rights, such as voting for Parliament and forming trade unions, one frequently finds workers' leaders, even those claiming to be Marxists, getting so involved in the detail of parliamentary contests and trade union work that they forget *why* they are engaged in these necessary activities and fall into Right-wing opportunism.

Of course revolutionaries must use every opportunity to educate and organise the masses, in preparation for the inevitable clash to overthrow the ruling classes from the seats of economic and political power. Elections and trade union work are most useful for such preparation, as we who come from countries where such valuable rights are absent are only too painfully aware. But once such activities become an end in themselves and the goal of socialism and workers' power is forgotten, or put into cold storage, policies are watered down to attract the most backward sections of the voters, workers'

leaders find themselves administering trade unions that are virtually a part of the bureaucratic state apparatus, and even if labour parties manage to win the elections and form governments, they merely find themselves running the capitalist state on behalf of the capitalist class.

There are also forms of 'Left-wing' opportunism which are often encountered in countries which, as a result of imperialism, are economically undeveloped. This usually takes the form of ultra-revolutionary demagogy, appeals to nationalist or racialist sentiment, appeals for adventurous 'action' without the necessary hard organisational and preparatory work to make that action effective. It was precisely this sort of ultra-left opportunism (the factional struggle of Bakunin and the anarchists against the Marxists) which wrecked the First International; just as it was the right-wing opportunism of the European Social-Democratic leaders which wrecked the Second.

The Third International was born out of the struggle against opportunism, and from the start it set its face sternly against its penetration into the movement. Strict conditions were laid down to which all Parties wishing to affiliate were obliged to adhere. The loose and flabby organisation which characterised the Second International was considered entirely inappropriate to the conditions of acute revolutionary struggle which the Comintern was structured to meet. All Congress and Executive decisions of the International were binding on affiliated Parties; though this did not of course mean that it could or should attempt to 'legislate' on details of strategy and tactics all over the world. Lenin's formulation of this point is very clearly indicative of the firm yet common-sense approach adopted:

> Operating in conditions of acute civil war, the Communist International must be far more centralised than the Second International was. It stands to reason, however, that in every aspect of their work the Communist International and its Executive Committee must take into account the diversity of conditions in which the respective parties have to fight and work, and adopt decisions binding on all parties only on matters in which such decisions are possible.

SINCE 1943

The Communist International was dissolved in 1943 in the midst of the second world war. In a previous article in this journal I traced briefly a brief analysis of some of the main achievements of the Comintern as well as some of its weaknesses—an exercise I do not propose here to repeat. Whatever shortcomings it may have from time to time developed, the Third International accomplished a great and indispensable mission, it helped to develop, to train and to purify scores of revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Parties in every continent; parties which have tirelessly and heroically defended the cause of the

working class, of national liberation and socialism, in innumerable historic struggles everywhere; which have sacrificed innumerable martyrs on the battlefields and in the jails and torture-chambers of fascism and colonialism; which have raised high the red banner of Communism under the most dangerous conditions of illegality and terror; which have already led the workers to the conquest of state power in a dozen countries besides the Soviet Union, and tomorrow will liberate the whole world from capitalism. These Parties are the precious heritage bequeathed to mankind by the immortal Communist International.

When Lenin formulated the above-mentioned condition of affiliation to the Comintern it was obviously very clear in his mind that the International, though its decisions were binding, should leave a wide area to the initiative and discretion of its member-parties. It is certainly true that at certain periods in its history the executive committee seemed to be unmindful of this wise reservation: examples of such a tendency are to be found in the history of the Party in South Africa at one period, and can no doubt be found in other areas as well. High-handed decisions, based on inadequate information, were taken from afar, which did the movement harm. Nevertheless, the history of the Comintern shows the enormous benefit which accrued to all the member-organisations through their affiliation. The advice and assistance rendered to young and struggling organisations; the benefit of the rich experience and profound theoretical understanding of the outstanding revolutionaries of many countries; the outstanding international solidarity campaigns and detailed information services which characterised the work of the International at its best, were at once a firm bedrock of support and an unrivalled school of revolutionary theory and practice.

There are those who stress only certain deficiencies of the Comintern —which the famous Seventh (and last) World Congress went far to correct—while forgetting its enormous positive contribution it made to the cause of human emancipation. Such historians are both doing violence to historical truth and at the same time undermining the very principles of world Communist unity upon which all three 'internationals' were founded. That principle continued to animate the affiliated Parties despite the dissolution of the organisation in 1943.

As the history of the movement has shown, those principles remain valid no matter what practical organisational expression they take at different times, and even though at certain periods they may not be expressed formally at all. The question of the form which unity takes is inevitably one which poses serious practical problems

I consider these problems very relevant just at this period when a

new world conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties is under active preparation in the quite different conditions of today.

When we look back we shall see that the ties between the Communist Parties of different countries have always been formalised in ways which were appropriate to the concrete political conditions existing at the time.

The brief excerpt from Lenin which prefaces this article, shows how he deals with the evolution of the international movement within the precise historical context of the development of the workers' movement and its tasks at each given period. The problem which faces the international Communist movement today is one of finding just those forms of unity—common discussion, leading to a common understanding and united action—which are appropriate to the present period.

The movement finds itself in a vastly different situation from that prevailing fifty years ago. The most obvious difference of course is the phenomenal growth of our movement itself—a factor which rejoices the heart not only of every Communist, but of those millions of non-Communists the world over who see in the Communist movement, and in the dozen socialist countries which are its proudest achievement, incomparably the most powerful force against imperialism, reaction and the devastation of a new world war, and the main hope of a better future for mankind.

But the vast increase in the size, strength and stature of the movement does not in itself guarantee that oneness of purpose and broad, overall approach to world problems which alone can enable it to mobilise its full potential in the fight against international imperialism and colonialism, and for the general advance of humanity towards democracy, national freedom and socialism.

For many years after the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 the very powerful traditions of the International enabled all the former constituent Parties to maintain a very high measure of practical unity of policy and outlook. It seemed to many that, once they had been given that far-reaching impetus, those traditions would be permanently binding, and that thenceforward there was no need for any formal expressions of internationalism at all. Experience, unfortunately has proved this to be to some extent illusory. Absorbed in internal problems some Parties showed tendencies to relegate their internationalist duties to a minor position. Even in some socialist countries—notably Yugoslavia, China and Albania—nationalist tendencies developed, expressing themselves in either Right or 'Left' forms of opportunism.

A number of measures were taken by the movement to overcome

these weaknesses and to restore unity, the most notable being the world meetings of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1957 and 1960 in Moscow. And, indeed these historic meetings served an invaluable purpose, enabling Communists everywhere to achieve a common, agreed programme to the problems and tasks of the present-day world.

However it would be absurd to pretend that thereby all the problems of unity were solved. Everyone knows that the Mao Tse-Tung group leading the Communist Party of China has long ago discarded the unanimously-agreed principles contained in the documents of 1957 and 1960 as 'revisionist', and violently denounces all the fraternal Parties which continue to adhere to these principles as traitors. In this they are followed by the Albanian Party of Labour and a number of splinter groups in various countries. The Yugoslav League of Communists refused even to attend the 1960 meeting, and its leaders have followed a policy, both internally and externally, which in my view trends away from socialism and towards capitalism. Nor does this complete the list of differences which have arisen in our movement. Without attempting to be exhaustive, one may mention that the Cuban comrades' estimates of events in Latin America often appear to be at variance with other fraternal Parties in that region; that several Parties, especially in Western Europe differed markedly with the rest in their assessment of so important a question as the recent events in Czechoslovakia; that in certain countries, such as India and Israel, major splits, culminating in organisational rupture and the formation of rival Parties, have taken place.

It may be said, and with truth, that differences and polemics within the revolutionary movement are nothing particularly new or alarming; they are a natural and healthy accompaniment of growth and development. Unfortunately, however, many of the differences referred to above contribute little or nothing to the maturing of the movement through the dialectic of inner debate, or to the enrichment of Marxist-Leninist science. Stereotyped formulas and slogans rendered all but meaningless through endless repetition, are often substituted for principled reasoning; vulgar abuse of other Parties combined with superstitious idolatry towards certain leaders—these and other un-communist and unscientific practices which have infected a section of the movement generate more heat than light and gravely retard, rather than assist, the always essential process of ever renewing and enriching Marxist science, of applying its brilliant method and true fundamentals to the new problems of a world in change.

Another tendency which makes more difficult the overcoming of differences and the restoration of Communist unity, is the exaggerated emphasis on 'independence' and 'sovereignty' which certain Party

leaders have been placing in recent years. It is true enough, and no one contests it, that the Marxists of any country have the inescapable duty of analysing their own situation and working out their own tactics. If others attempt such detailed assessments they are likely to be wrong. But this generalisation can be carried too far. The personal correspondence of Marx and Engels, no less than the records of the proceedings of the Comintern, abound in instances where the leaders of Parties all over the world freely sought to draw on the advice and experience of the most senior leaders of the movement abroad, and profited richly by it. Overstress on 'independence' tends to draw attention from the most important aspect of the relationships between the various Parties and the world movement—that is their *inter-dependence* in the face of the imperialist enemy, and the *internationalism* both in theory and practice, which is the very cornerstone of the modern working class movement.

One cannot help observing that the leaders of certain Parties have developed a sort of morbid sensitivity towards any criticism of their policies and actions on the part of brother-Communists abroad, regarding it as a sort of 'interference' in their affairs. (Though it must also be observed that most of the same Party leaders seldom exercise the same restraint in criticising the policies and actions of others!) This cannot at all be regarded as a healthy development. Serious revolutionaries welcome criticism, take it seriously, and attempt to make use of it. We cannot expect a gathering of working class fighters to behave like a convention of diplomatic representatives where every-one is afraid to speak out for fear of hurting someone's feelings. It is certainly a spirit which has nothing in common with revolutionary tradition and is far removed from the healthy give-and-take spirit of comradely criticism which characterised the best periods of the Comintern.

Tendencies such as those referred to have largely contributed to the deterioration in the cohesion and united action of the movement since 1960, when the last world conference of Communist and Workers' Parties took place. But it would be incorrect to deduce that such tendencies are dominant in the movement. On the contrary, the great majority of Communists and their Parties all over the world have evidenced the most lively concern with the restoration and further development of unity at a time when international imperialism—taking advantage of our disunity—is making one onslaught after another on the positions already won by the working class and national liberation movements all over the world. For the Communist movement is the vanguard of the broad anti-imperialist, democratic and liberationist movements everywhere. If the vanguard Parties themselves fail to

come together to plan and carry out united actions against the common enemy, they cannot hope to accomplish their mission of uniting all the progressive, anti-imperialist forces for fresh advances and victories for the working people.

It is this realisation by most Communists that has been the driving force behind the patient and consistent work of preparation for the world conference of the Parties due to take place in Moscow in May.

It is a matter of justified pride for our people that the communists of Africa are unanimous in supporting this conference. Our pioneer South African Communist Party has consistently pressed for the holding of such an *indaba* since 1963, and has taken an active part in the preparatory work.

The Moscow Conference cannot, in itself, accomplish the task of restoring and implementing complete unity in the movement. It has limited aims—of working out common action against imperialism and rallying the progressive forces of the working people everywhere.

But it is a first step, and an extremely important one at that, in what must be the long term aims of all who believe in Marxism, working class internationalism. Working together on limited tasks, achieving united action, is a primary essential towards restoring a broader and more permanent unity, and in evolving those concrete forms of co-operation and co-ordination which are suitable for the present period, the closing decades of the twentieth century.

We cannot expect those forms to be a carbon copy of the type of organisation which was suitable at the time of the Comintern; the movement today is vastly different, bigger, more mature; its immediate tasks are widely different as well. But its fundamental principles are the same. The history of the Communist International—in its firmness of discipline, its tradition of unyielding struggle against opportunism, nationalism and other departures from internationalist principles—is a rich treasury of lessons which cannot be disregarded by the revolutionary movement of our times.

PHILOSOPHY *IS* PARTISAN

On and off, since its inception, this journal has urged those of its readers who are seriously seeking to understand their world and how to change it, to study Marxist theory. We received, from one group of readers who have formed a circle to do just that, an interesting summary of their conclusions after studying Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. These readers are all African students at a Soviet University.

IT IS A FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH that 'one nation can and should learn from others' (K. Marx, *Capital*) 'No one in Africa or anywhere else can understand our world and its problems without studying the background and consequences of the Russian Socialist Revolution.'[1] It is in the light of these theses that we wish to discuss the *ideological battle* which the Bolshevik party had to wage against revisionist elements within the party and the Second International before the Great October Socialist Revolution; secondly, Lenin's theory of partisanship in philosophy; and thirdly, on the significance of Lenin's theory for the oppressed people of South Africa.

Let us introduce ourselves to two frequent philosophical terms in this article: *idealism* and *materialism.*

Every important school or philosophical thought falls into one of two broad categories—idealism and materialism.

Philosophical idealism believes in the primacy of spiritual things, ideas over reality, matter. Some idealists claim that matter has no objective existence, being merely a reflection of ideas in the mind of an intangible super-being, a god, who has created everything.

Philosophical materialism rejects this mystical concept, the basis of the various religious schools of thought. It insists on the primacy of reality, of matter in all its various forms. Ideas themselves are only true if they correspond to the realities of the material world; and ideas are but the product of a special form of matter: the human brain. Marxists belong to the materialist school of philosophy. They believe in the objective existence of the universe in which they live. It was not created by any super-natural being. It has no beginning and no end.[2]

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[1] *The African Communist*, No. 28, p. 13.
[2] *The African Communist*, No. 16, p. 73.

And, developing from that, the world outlook of a man may be scientific or not scientific; materialistic or idealistic; atheistic or religious; progressive or reactionary.

BACKGROUND TO THE WRITING OF THE BOOK

Materialism and Empirio-Criticism—one of V. I. Lenin's major works, was written in 1908. It was a time when the bourgeoisie, frightened by the new revolutionary class, the working class was starting on an idealist and religious campaign to blunt the consciousness and fighting spirit of the working class; to mystify the true theory of social development—Marxism.

Opposition to idealist theories was negligible. Many of the journals of the working class (Social Democrats) published the articles of the rising idealists; many of the outstanding leaders of the Second International opposed partisanship in philosophy and declared that the working class may, with equal success or advantage, be guided either by an idealist or a Marxist philosophy.

In Russia itself the ideological battle had become acute after the defeat of the 1905-1907 revolution.

Many of the bourgeois circles who had sympathised with the revolution during its heyday developed a defeatist and pessimistic attitude. Social Democrats belonging either to the Bolsheviks or the Mensheviks fell victim to religious and idealist beliefs, translated many works of foreign idealist literature into Russian and even attempted to prove that Marxism and bourgeois philosophy are one and the same thing. It fell to Lenin to defend Marxist materialist philosophy, without which the great problems standing before the Bolshevik Party could not be solved. Without a well-founded and scientific basis the party could not work out the right strategy and tactics against Tsarism and the bourgeoisie—for the victory of a socialist revolution. Without a struggle against philosophical revisionism it was impossible to fight against political revisionism.

Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* became the sharpest spear in the hands of the party, the Russian workers and the international working class movement as a whole. And amongst many philosophical problems which the beginning of the century put forward and to which Lenin gave an answer was the question of partisanship in philosophy.

'PARTIES IN PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHICAL BLOCKHEADS'

The chapter we are dealing with here is the last one in the book. Having given a materialist answer to the many questions or theories

advanced by the idealists, V. I. Lenin consciously summarises his book with this chapter which deals with 'whether, in general, there are parties in philosophy, and what is meant by non-partisanship in philosophy.'

Let V. I. Lenin speak for himself:

> Throughout the preceding exposition, in connection with every problem of epistemology touched upon and in connection with every philosophical question raised by the new physics, we traced the struggle between *materialism* and *idealism*. Behind the mass of new terminological artifices, behind the clutter of erudite scholasticism, we invariably discerned *two* principal alignments, two fundamental trends in the solution of philosophical problems. Whether nature, matter, the physical, the external world should be taken as primary, and consciousness, mind, sensation (experience—as the *widespread* terminology of our time has it), the psychical, etc., should be regarded as secondary—that is the root question which *in fact* continues to divide the philosophers into *two great camps*. The source of thousands upon thousands of errors and of the confusion reigning in this sphere is the fact that beneath the covering of terms, definitions, scholastic devices and verbal artifices, these two fundamental trends are overlooked.

There are only two main philosophies—materialism and idealism.

Marx and Engels mercilessly brushed aside innumerable attempts to 'discover' a 'new' trend and so forth. The verbal nature of such attempts, the scholastic play with new philosophical 'isms', this is what Marx and Engels persistently tracked down and fought against throughout their activity.

It is impossible for any philosophy to be non-partisan because in solving the fundamental question of any philosophy it has to fall either to the materialist or idealist school. And speaking about political economy, Lenin says that this is 'as much a *partisan* science as is *epistemology*.' Taken as a whole, the professors of economics are nothing but learned salesmen of the capitalist class, while the professors of philosophy are learned 'salesmen of the theologians.'

'The task of Marxists in both cases is to be able to master and refashion the achievements of these "salesmen". . . and *to be able* to lop off their reactionary tendency, to pursue your *own* line and to combat the *whole line* of the forces and classes hostile to us.'

> . . . behind the epistemological scholasticism of empirio-criticism one must not fail to see the struggle of parties in philosophy, a struggle which in the last analysis reflects the tendencies and ideology of the antagonistic classes in modern society. Recent philosophy is as partisan as was philosophy two thousand years ago. The contending parties are essentially . . . materialism and idealism.

MATERIALISM AND IDEALISM IN STRIFE

In the Republic of South Africa, for instance, the fascist government having already arrested thousands of outstanding freedom fighters,

made what they called 'the final swoop' on July 11th, 1963. They raided a house in Rivonia near Johannesburg and arrested such brilliant and fearless patriots as Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki and their comrades. The special branch policemen—Vorster's Gestapo—immediately boasted that they had thus 'smashed the underground headquarters of the African National Congress' and, with the arrest of the Congress leadership, had 'destroyed' the liberation movement of South Africa. The life imprisonment imposed on these fearless men and also on South Africa's hero Nelson Mandela has had far-reaching consequences. It was followed in certain circles by a wave of despondency deliberately fostered by the oppressing class in South Africa based on the belief that the struggle in South Africa had *ended* with the arrests. Thus the Vorster gang fight our peoples movement with the weapon of subjective idealism—primacy of the consciousness or ideas of man (subject) over reality, matter. This can well be compared to the defeatist poison injected into the Russian oppressed by their bourgeoisie after the failure of the 1905-1907 revolution. The working class of Russia had to note, as we do, that the ideology of the oppressing class aims at disarming and destroying the revolutionary upsurge of the oppressed people.

'The pure idealist explains the origin of the idea as having been planted in man's mind by an outside, supernatural force—a God.'[3] In the same way the Vorster gang wants the suffering people of South Africa to believe that their ideas were 'created' by the Rivonians, and did not spring from their own economic and political position in the country. But does it need 'an outside, supernatural force' for even an African simpleton to know that he has almost no land to till and that the white man is having stretches of miles of rich farms; that his way out of hunger and taxes is to 'join' the migrant labour to the mines where he will earn £1 5s. 0d. a week and even less; that to strike against such a wage means jail; that in fact he is forbidden by law to take part in making any law that governs his life; that he would naturally *strive to change*, nay, destroy any such government for a government that has respect for his life also?

'. . . man's ideas, views and conceptions, in a word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life.' (K. Marx and F. Engels—*Communist Manifesto*). This is materialism. And, on a materialist path, Nelson Mandela says 'The A.N.C. . . . is a struggle of the African people inspired by their own suffering and their own experience. It is a struggle for the right to live.'

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[3] *The African Communist*, No. 16, p. 74.

But now that Mr. Balthazar Vorster and Company have locked up our leaders, 'the implanters of ideas and chaos', they want and expect us to fold our hands and be complacent.

South Africa—the real South Africa that strives and longs for freedom—admits the hard and bitter blow she sustained by the capture and life imprisonment imposed on the Rivonians and many of her great sons and daughters—the very cream of our fatherland. We regard them firstly as heroes—soldiers captured in the battle-field. But as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, as sure as night must be conquered by day, as sure as capitalism must be conquered by socialism, a highly organised army of other soldiers, forming the vanguard of the oppressed masses of South Africa embittered and impatient of the prevailing humiliating conditions of living shall rise, smash and pull down the old long rotten regime and build a new and bright society of happiness for all. The question is time.

After the Rivonia capture the South African bourgeoisie, panic-stricken and convinced of an impending and inevitable revolution (the very 'locomotive of history'—Lenin) thought they could postpone it for ever by spreading a general wave of idealism. To this effect a powerful flood of propaganda was emitted through all wave bands of the radio and the official press, in order to spread demoralisation, lack of confidence and disunity in the ranks of those who stand and believe in freedom; in order that oppressed South Africa should disband her forces for freedom, and capitulate *before the real confrontation takes place!* Just as the Russian bourgeoisie wanted the oppressed to submit to Tsarism, the South African bourgeoisie wants our people to submit to racism and fascism. Lenin said that behind idealism stand reactionary social forces—the exploiting class. Behind materialism—forces of progress—classes that fight against the exploitation of man by man.

Characteristic of bourgeois ideology is the use of *non-partisanship* in words, and partisanship in deeds. Students in the capitalist world have constant confrontations with such professors of philosophy and other sciences. These gentlemen have distinct double and conflicting lives—life inside the class-room, which they declare has to be non-partisan because it aims at 'truth' and 'objectivity'; and life in the real world outside the class-room: life of riches and abject poverty, life of exploitation of man by man, life of parliaments only for the haves. This life of the class-room with its 'non-partisanship' in fact pumps the student with idealism and religion, or with distorted versions of the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin—of dialectical and historical materialism.

What joys this South Africa of ours has. Non-partisanship in the

class-room when millions of children who cannot pay for their education are deprived of the right to learn. Non-partisanship, when a small minority makes merciless laws, tortures, hangs, exploits and perpetuates its power over the majority?

Bourgeois propaganda has so many agents and tentacles. It has managed to get hold of the minds of some sections of the oppressed, including the youth, and lead them to believe that in South Africa, the best contribution to changing the present society can now be done only by a youth organisation that is 'non-partisan' or 'above politics.' This bourgeois propaganda disarms the revolutionary youth. But in it there is an admission that none the less class antagonisms or clashing class interests exist. It is hoped that the way to destroy them is to overlook or jump over them. Yet Young South Africa cannot overlook reality. The youth that knows that to live and organise itself above misery it must be committed to freeing our fatherland. Thus the youth is destroying this sham of non-partisanship by turning to struggle under the leadership of the African National Congress—the spear and shield of the oppressed masses.

As long as classes and class struggles exist, there are not and can never be non-partisan organisations or philosophies not concerned with the position and interests of this or the other class. The ideology of the bourgeoisie, its professors and revisionists of Marxism who claim to be non-partisans, maintain that partisanship does not go hand in hand with objectivity, with science. That is true for those whose philosophy expresses and defends the position of classes which are departing from the scene of history. For when philosophy expresses the interests of the decadent classes, it starts to contradict truth about life and stops being scientific. But philosophy becomes objective, scientific when it truly reflects life, when it expresses the position and interests of the progressive classes of society. The Marxist-Leninist principle of partisanship in philosophy is born from the coincidence of truth, real life, with working class interests. The reactionary partisanship of the idealist philosophy is born out of antagonistic contradictions between real life, truth, and interests of the exploiters.

It is not only Marxist philosophy that coincides with science. Materialist philosophy of the 17th-18th century, for instance, expressed the interests of the new rising bourgeois class, then a progressive class of society; it fought *against* the religious and idealistic world outlook of feudalism, it was partisan and, despite its limitations, scientific. That philosophy helped in the development of science and society as a whole. However the position completely changed when the bourgeoisie changed from being a progressive to being a reactionary class. Its interest now is to eternalise exploitation of man by man, and

therefore gives fierce resistance to the revolutionary working class and national liberation movements. Expressing the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, the present bourgeoisie is also partisan. But that partisanship now does not coincide with science, Their philosophy expresses and stands for egoistic interests of a minority—the reactionary bourgeoisie. And therefore in order to retain the capitalist system and perpetuate the rule of its class, the ideology of the present bourgeoisie is to paint capitalism in gold colours, and to soil socialism and Marxist philosophy.

On the other hand a scientific world outlook, truly reflecting the objective laws of development of nature and society, defends the interests of the advancing classes of those who shoulder progress, Such a world outlook is Marxism-Leninism—the outlook of the most advanced class, the modern working class—'these labour-powers,' '. . . the class whose vocation in history is the overthrow of the capitalist mode of production and the final abolition of all classes'. This is the partisan philosophy of the proletariat and its vanguard—the Communist Party. Marxism-Leninism openly declares and consistely stands for the principle of partisanship in philosophy. It regards dialectical and historical materialism as a powerful ideological weapon in the hands of the proletariat who are struggling for their freedom from capitalism, and for the victory of communism.

There are only two clear roads before man: *idealism* or *materialism.* Materialism—the beacon of the winding, hard but glorious path of the struggles of the working peoples of the world—the bayonet and bastion for Man.

Idealism—so soft and so flitting, so simple and so filthy; so safe a pass—reaction and treachery: the bog of blood, the abyss of the bourgeoisie and its boys.

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world, 'Now is the time for the furnaces, and only Light should be seen.' (Jose Marti)

BOOK REVIEWS

African Women (*Their legal status in South Africa*), by H. J. Simons, C. Hurst & Co. Ltd. 1968 (London) 84s.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF African women to the struggle for national freedom in South Africa has been immense. Over and over again African women have initiated and organised militant demonstrations, strikes and even revolts in support of democratic demands. In the process they have created powerful mass movements and thrown up an outstanding leadership. Outside of politics their activity has been no less remarkable. Overcoming fantastic disabilities African women have not only been the mainstay of the fanatical progress of the African in education but have taken a worthy place side by side with the men in many fields. It is all the more surprising therefore that the affairs and activities of African women in South Africa have received so little attention from writers and commentators. This fascinating book by Dr. H. J. Simons ('Jack' to everyone in the liberation movement) is doubly welcome as a pioneering work in this field and a very good one indeed.

As the title indicates this is a book about the legal status of African women. But let us hasten to add that it is not one of those 'Lawyers' books' whose purpose seems to be to render the darkness more opaque. Simply and in detail the book traces the developments of the laws affecting African women in the different provinces from the early years of European government in South Africa. The effect of customary laws, European legislation and prejudice on the lives of African women is explained in detail. The position of women in marriage under customary laws or by Christian rites; their capacity to perform legal acts; their rights of inheritance; their disabilities in urban and rural areas are explained simply and clearly.

But simplicity and clarity are the attributes of the writer and certainly not those of the laws he is examining. The confusion, discrimination

and mindless incompetence revealed by this survey can only arouse righteous anger among all intelligent people.

What the book shows is that African women suffer disabilities not on two fronts as the author says but on three. First of all African women are shown to suffer in common with their men the effects of racial discriminatory laws and exploitation for which South Africa is notorious. In addition, of course, women suffer sex disabilities many of which they share with all women whatever their colour or race in South Africa. Thirdly and this is the main subject of this book African women suffer from special disabilities arising from the conflict of African and European law and the failure of legislators to understand the problem and treat it in an organised and progressive fashion. Having lost whatever rights they may have had under the old African social system, the African women find that they do not gain new rights under so-called modern legislation. Much of the laws in this field are not the result either of sex discrimination or racial discrimination but just criminal incompetence and ignorance on the part of the various governments of South Africa over the years. Too busy with repression of the African people as a whole, governments have not had the time to realise the need for serious and comprehensive reform of many of these disabilities. The legal provision of registration of customary marriages a few years ago was a small, hesitant and typically warped step in the right direction by the Nationalist government. But what is really needed is a root and branch change of the legal system which will ensure complete equality of men and women. This can only be accomplished by a replacement of the present regime by a democratic one representative of all the people of South Africa.

Dr. Simons observes in his last chapter that the African women have chosen to fight alongside their men for emancipation rather than for the demands of a feminist movement. Actually the African women have no choice. Their voteless, rightless oppressed men could not give them any rights as they have none themselves. What is of moment is that by their contribution and sacrifices the African women have won the right to a definite and clear commitment by the liberation movement that freedom will bring with it complete equality not only for all but specifically between men and women. The women are entitled to get this commitment expressed here and now.

The book is a strong advocate of the rights of African women and should be obtained and carefully studied by all students of South African affairs. There are two obstacles which may make it difficult for the masses to gain access to the book. Because Dr. Simons is banned in South Africa his writings cannot be sold there. This is a pity because academics, lawyers and even the government would be

well advised to study this book which has nothing to do with political criticism of the present regime as such. The restriction of the market to countries outside South Africa might explain the very high price which most people will find beyond their reach.

There are a few technical criticisms that could be levelled at the manner of production of the book. For instance the placing of references at the end of each chapter is irritating. But none of this can detract from the merit of this work, which is of the kind we always expect from Dr. Jack Simons.

A.Z.

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WORLD COMMUNIST CONFERENCE TO MEET NEXT MAY IN MOSCOW

Decisions and Documents of the Preparatory Committee Meeting—Budapest, November 18-21, 1968.

THE COMMUNIQUE

The Preparatory Committee for the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties met from November 18th to November 21st, 1968, in Budapest.

Representatives of 67 Communist and Workers' Parties took part in the meeting.*

Letters were received from several parties informing the Preparatory Committee that they could not send representatives.

The Preparatory Committee, in accordance with the statement adopted at its September-October 1968 session, examined the question of convening and the method of further preparing the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties. The participants in the Preparatory Committee discussed this question extensively and

* The Communique lists the names of Parties from the following countries: Algeria, U.S.A., Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Bolivia, Brazil, Ceylon, Chile, Cyprus, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, South Africa, Dominica, Ecuador, N. Ireland, Irish Republic, France, Greece, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Canada, Colombia, Poland, Lebanon, Luxemburg, Hungary, Morocco, Martinique, Mexico, Mongolia, Great Britain, German Democratic Republic, West Berlin, German Federal Republic, Nicaragua, Italy, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Réunion, Rumania, El Salvador, San Marino, Spain, Switzerland, Syria, Soviet Union, Sudan, Turkey, Tunisia, Uruguay, Venezuela 'and a Party in illegality whose name has not been made public for security reasons.' Representatives of the Communist Party of Norway and of the Left Party—Communists of Sweden participated as observers.

comprehensively, and accordingly they agreed to convene the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow in May 1969, with the agenda adopted at the Consultative Meeting: "The tasks of our struggle against imperialism in the present stage, and united action of Communist and Workers' Parties, and of all anti-imperialist forces."

They further agreed to convene the next session of the Preparatory Committee in Moscow on March 17th, 1969 to consider the draft documents of the forthcoming Conference, to take the necessary decisions on the questions of the organisation of the Conference and to fix its exact date. They requested the Working Group to prepare the draft documents of the Conference by the next session of the Preparatory Committee.

The Preparatory Committee reaffirms its appeal to all fraternal Communist and Workers' Parties, expecially to those which have not yet participated in the preparation of the Conference, to join in this work.

The representatives of the Communist Party of Great Britain, the Swiss Party of Labour and the Rénuion Communist Party, who in principle agree with the convening of the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties, will communicate the final view of their respective parties on these decisions following consultations with their leading party organs. The other delegations unanimously adopted the communique.

The work of the Preparatory Committee took place in an atmosphere of a frank exchange of opinions and in a spirit of comradely co-operation. It expressed the determination of Communist and Workers' Parties to strengthen the bonds of friendship and solidarity uniting them on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

The delegations of all parties present expressed warm thanks to the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party for the fraternal hospitality and the excellent organisation of the work of the Preparatory Committee. They extended their best wishes on the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Communist Party of Hungary, and wholeheartedly wished the members of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the Hungarian people further successes in the building of socialism.

DECLARATION ON VIETNAM

The representatives of 67 fraternal parties attending the November 21st Preparatory Session of the International Conference of Com-

munist and Workers' Parties warmly salute the Vietnamese people who, by their heroic struggle, have won new successes.

The fact that the American Government has been compelled to end completely and unconditionally its bombing raids and other military operations against the Vietnam Democratic Republic, as well as the agreement that the delegation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the representatives of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam will take part in the Paris talks, are important victories of the Vietnamese people and of all the forces of peace and progress throughout the world.

The Communist and Workers' Parties reaffirm their solidarity with the heroic people of Vietnam who are fighting against the aggression of United States imperialism. Our parties will continue to maintain their vigilance in the face of imperialist threats. They will continue to increase their actions, together with all the peace forces, with the aim of achieving the total withdrawal of the troops of the United States and its allies from Vietnam, and ensure the Vietnamese people the sovereign right to manage their own affairs, in conditions of independence and peace.

INDONESIA

Defend the Lives of Communists and other Patriots of Indonesia!

WE, THE REPRESENTATIVES of 67 Communist and Workers' Parties, who have gathered in Budapest, condemn with anger and indignation the brutal war of extermination conducted by Indonesian reaction against Communists and other democrats, who are bravely fighting against imperialism for the freedom and independence of their country.

This monstrous, bloody terror has been raging now for three years. Tens of thousands of people have been killed, or have died under torture; hundreds of thousands are suffering and perishing in prisons and concentration camps. Comrade Aidit, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indonesia, and other leaders of the Communist Party have been executed without trial or sentence. The reactionaries have recently committed a new savage crime: the execution of comrades Njono and Sudisman.

The rulers of Indonesia, despite the protest of world public opinion are intensifying the terror, and physically exterminating Communists and other democrats.

We again condemn these atrocities! Stop the bloodbath! No more victims! We declare our unshakeable solidarity with the Communists

and other democrats of Indonesia. Expressing the will of the peoples of our countries, we demand an end to this terror and the release of all political prisoners.

The crimes of the Indonesian reactionaries will not go unpunished. They will never succeed in extinguishing the Indonesian people's will for freedom nor its determination to struggle against imperialism.

Let the voice of protest ring out throughout the world against the evil deeds of the reactionaries!

Budapest, November 19th, 1968

LATIN AMERICA

Declaration of Solidarity by 67 Fraternal Parties with the Struggle of the Patriots of Guatemala, Paraguay and Haiti.

AT THE NOVEMBER 21ST SESSION of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties, 67 fraternal parties expressed their indignation at the savage and bloody repression of the American imperialists and their local puppets against the revolutionary forces fighting for their countries' freedom and independence in Guatemala, Paraguay and Haiti.

In Guatemala, leaders of the workers and peasants such as Victor Manuel Gutierrez, Rafael Tischler, and Leonardo Castillo Flores have been brutally murdered. Many thousands of people have disappeared during the last three years and suffered inhuman tortures. Terrorist bands, supported by the Guatemalan government and by American imperialists have committed murder by the most barbarous methods.

In Haiti, thousands of patriots have been kidnapped and tortured to death during the last eight months. Many have been executed without a legal trial.

The representatives of the fraternal parties strongly condemn this ruthless war of extermination that violates elementary human rights. They speak out in defence of communists and other patriots fighting courageously and tenaciously in Guatemala, Paraguay, Haiti and other Latin American countries, and demand an immediate halt to the brutal terror against them. They assure the revolutionary forces of Latin America of their solidarity in the struggle against American imperialism and the reactionary terrorist regimes supported by the United States. They call upon world opinion to protest against the crimes of imperialism committed against the communists and other patriots of Latin America.

May this protest contribute to the victory of the anti-imperialist struggle in Latin America!

Budapest, November 21st, 1968

Printed by Farleigh Press Ltd. (T.U.), Watford, Herts.

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